

HEAVEN METAL

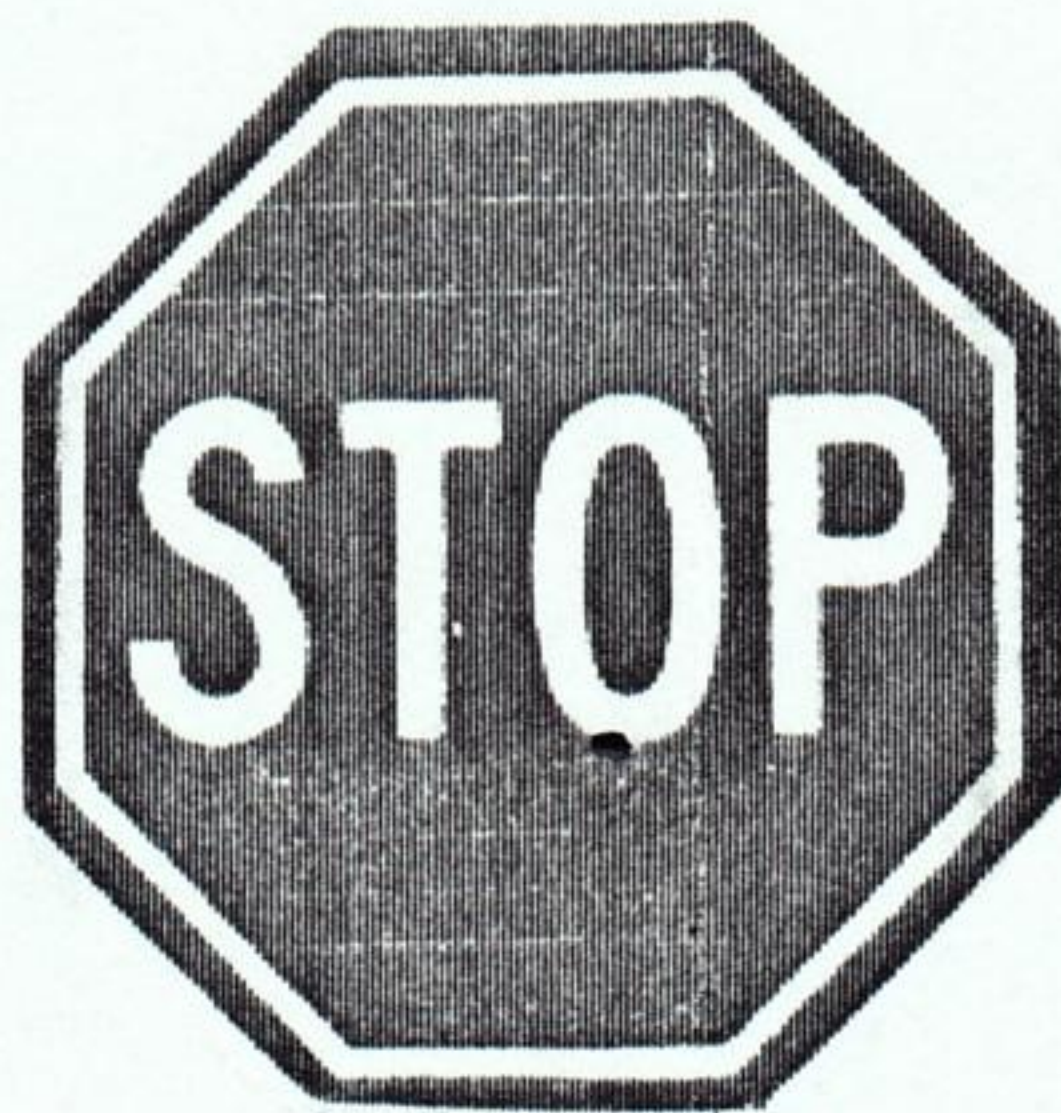
VOLUME II

ISSUE # 3

\$1.00



Special Message Pg. 21



STOP!

Christian rockers need to stop going in our own direction. We need to stop separating ourselves from the rest of the body of Christ. The body of Christ is the whole group of people who have been saved by the precious blood of Jesus. Everyone who's been born again is a member of the body of Christ. This body has many parts, one of which is us: the Christian hard rockers.

As rockers for Christ, so many of us face attack from our brothers and sisters. We hear accusations that the bands we listen to aren't from God. This attack, which hurts both us and God, makes it easy for us to alienate ourselves from those accusing us. So often we respond by thinking, "Well, you can think what you want. I'm going to reach the lost and spread the gospel." That's not love. It's love and compassion for the lost, but it's not love for your brothers and sisters. What's it say in the Bible? "They'll know you are Christians by your love for the lost?" No. It says, in 3 John 6, "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

If we cut off a brother or sister because they don't agree with our music ministry interests, we are cutting the body of Christ apart. Stop it!

Our purpose as disciples of Christ is not to convert metalheads into Christian metalheads. We're to further the kingdom of God. We do this by leading lost souls in the metal scene, who so desperately need the same person we need—to Jesus. We also do this by loving our brothers and sisters. We're family now. Why would an unsaved rocker, who has access to all the pleasures of the world, want to be adopted into a family that fights amongst themselves? Let's love each other.

A tough question that comes up is, "What if I try to love my accusing brother or sister and they don't love me?" Well, you can't make them love you and you're not responsible for their loving you. What you can do is love them. Love is the most winning argument in any case.

We really don't need to waste our time defending the fact that God is speaking through His metal missionaries, of which we are included—if we have can speak. We, as well as the bands, are God's instruments to reach this headbanging generation. We can't do it if we don't have the help of the body of Christ. Even if other parts of the body don't want to help us, the first step is ours—being faithful and loving to them, just like Jesus.

Again, it's so easy for us to form our own little counter-culture and be cool for God. God has some very strong things to say about believers not being in fellowship with one another: "If someone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen." (1 John 4:20)

Let's not study up on the Word to get ammunition so we can straighten Jimmy Swaggert out. Let's study up on the Word so we can live straight. Our holy lives lived out is going to lead more people to Christ and make people realize that God is into His metal music than all of our arguments ever will.

We, as Christian metalheads, are facing problems that our "long-haired friends of Jesus" did during the Jesus movement of the early seventies. We can learn a lot by their example.

Let's look at Larry Norman. He received enormous amounts of flak over his appearance and his music. He was constantly accused of being backslidden and of the devil. Did he fight back? Did he exert all sorts of energy trying to straighten his accusers out? No. He stayed faithful to his highest calling: to love the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind. Out of that love for God, he could love his neighbor, who may not have acted neighborly, as himself.

Where is Larry Norman now? He's right there in God's presence, sharing with people and having a profound impact on many people's lives and functioning as part of the body of Christ.

Now let's look at a hypothetical person from the Jesus movement. This person received the same kind of flak that Larry did, only he argued with those in opposition to him. He won some of these arguments, but the majority of them ended by his just walking away with a bad taste in his mouth. Walking away to "serve God his own way" became a lifestyle that is akin to the "Lone Ranger-Christian" mold that is separate from the body. When persecution and other distress came upon him, he didn't have the body to support him and he eventually fell. The "Lone Ranger is" unadvisable and unbiblical. There is no case in the Bible of a man or woman of God who was out of fellowship. Our greatest role model, Jesus, spent lots of his time in fellowship, pouring His life into His twelve disciples.

We need fellowship. We need it amongst our fellow Christian metal enthusiasts, as well as with the Southern Gospel fans, as well as our "all music whatsoever is of the devil"—brethren.

This is not to say that local fellowships or churches composed of one style of person are wrong at all. Fellowships like Sanctuary are anointed and led by God. We just need to keep our focus on God and not only on the people who are just like us. Yes, God is going to use us mightily if we let Him. Keep in mind that He's also gonna use Jimmy Swaggert and David Wilkerson. It would be nice if they had the same attitude towards us, but the best way to persuade them is not with the truth wielded like a club, but with love and blessings. The truth will speak for itself through our lives—if we live it out.

This group of modern-day John the Baptists are actively destroying the works of the devil through their music and their lives. They are out in the metal mission field calling people to a point of repentance, preparing the way for the Lord.

This interview finds Bloodgood catching up on their mail that piled up during their **DETONATION** studio recording. It was one of the most enjoyable interviews I've ever had. Michael is one special person. Les was even nice enough to scream in the phone at my request. I'm still a little hard of hearing, but I can type out this story anyway.

**What types of spiritual warfare do you guys face? Can you give some examples?

"When we were playing in Santa Cruz a couple months ago we had a kid down at the front of the audience, who was just screaming bloody murder at us. Cursing and cursing. Wallpaper was falling off the wall. We were towards the end of the concert. You know that break in **ANGUISH AND PAIN**? We just stopped the band. Les went over there with the microphone and started talking to this kid. He was just screaming at us. Calling us liars and this and that. He began to pour his heart out and stuff. He had been through the ringers his whole life. He'd been out of jail. Apparently he had killed some guy at one point. He said nobody in the world loved him. Nobody in the world had ever loved him and stuff. It was awesome man, because the Christians in the audience began praying. They could just see what this kid was going through. So anyway, Les talked to him and went on for a little while, so we ended up finishing finally **ANGUISH AND PAIN** and we did an encore and stuff. This guy stuck around. To make a long story short: the Christians there wouldn't let him out of the theater. When we got out of our costumes, Les went and talked with him and, about an hour or two later, led him to the Lord. As far as we know, he's still going to church and stuff. We've heard back from the promoter once or twice.

"Even trying to get the concerts is warfare: with mufflers falling off and cars breaking down. It seems like we can tell when God's about to do a great work, because ole' slewfoot's in there trying to stop us with everything he's got.

"I just got a letter from a kid out in Florida, contemplating suicide. It's pretty awesome when you're in a rock band and ministering the gospel. Here you are a rock band and these kids are writing you with these literally life and death questions. We're just praying that God would open up even a counseling area, where I can turn some of these letters over to people; like when we're on the road and stuff. When you get 500 pieces of mail and you get a death letter and it was written in August, you're going 'Aahh!'

"We encounter warfare all the time, just about everywhere we turn. It seems that when God begins to use your ministry, you encounter it at every turn. From the simplest things to the most complex things. The actual concerts are just one fraction of the actual overall ministry picture. You get attacks in your personal lives. It's not scary, but you realize when you're becoming a threat to the devil...I love it. It gets me off. When things are streaming along and everything's great and there's no problems, that's when I begin to wonder how effective I'm being as a Christian. It seems like when you begin to really turn your life over to Christ and be used by Him daily, irregardless of whether

you're in a band or not—just being a Christian of any kind. You start getting those kinds of attacks and you get to a point where you begin looking for them, knowing they're gonna be there. It seems like after every great victory you also have to keep on your guard. Kind of like Joshua after he had defeated Ai. The next day the Gibeonites are right there. He ends up blowing it big time. (Joshua 8 & 9) "We just try to keep on our spiritual toes as much as we can, believe me. If you pray a lot—it seems like a pat answer—but really the band was started in prayer and we try to keep it that way. If you're asking for guidance from the counselor, the King of kings, then generally it's a lot easier to stay on the right track. That's what we try to do."

Your lyrics are direct attacks at Satan. **SOLDIER OF PEACE, for example. What was going on in your mind when you wrote that?

"As far as the heavy metal thing, I didn't see a lot of anthems and 'gather around the flagpole'-type music for Christians. I think that's kinda like where **STAND IN THE LIGHT** and **SOLDIER OF PEACE** came from. There's all these stupid heavy metal songs, like Dio singing **WE ROCK** and all these people getting all excited really about nothing. Nothing that changes their life. I wanted to write a song that was like that, that all of us could sing. It's kind of like the story of the guys in that band in a sort of way. Where we've come from and what we're doing now. Taking that energy and that excitement that you had in the world, just playing secular rock and roll and realizing that now you're doing it for Jesus. Now here comes Bloodgood or whoever armed and dangerous, you know? On the attack, rather than being a victim of Satan. Now we're out to get him through the power of Jesus. That's kinda what the song's about."

**Do you have a vision of your ministry?

"Before the band ever existed, the Lord gave me the initial vision for the band. I knew, strange as it may seem, that it was gonna be a mixed band. What I mean by that is: I really felt that two guys in the band were gonna be guys who had been experienced in the Christian rock area and that had been in the ministry for a while. I also felt that the other half of the band were to be guys that were fairly fresh and hadn't been in Christian music a long time. People who were really eager to go out there and evangelize and just go out there and use their chops and their licks for the Lord. Actually that didn't happen until J.T. left the band and Mark Welling came in. Now that's exactly how the band is. Mark and Les were a little bit new in that area. David and I had both been in the Christian ministry for a number of years. I also knew it was gonna be a national act. This was long before I'd ever dreamed about who was gonna be in the band. The Lord kinda gave me a vision about where the band was gonna go. It's all just happened just like He said it would. It wasn't anything that we've tried to strive or accomplish in our own power. The Lord's just literally made it happen.

"As far as the vision now, we just wanna continue on and become more effective and grow as the Lord wants us to grow. We let most of the other stuff take care of itself. We're just looking for the tours and all that, but all that's more administrative than anything. Our main vision is to keep ourselves as effective as we can. That's just by keeping our own personal lives where they belong and bring our priorities

straight. I think the Lord will take care of everything else."

**Let's say Christian metal becomes real popular with the world. What would your response be to your increased vast number of listeners?

"My response would be exactly the way it is now. Bloodgood is not a heavy metal band that happens to be Christian. We're a Christian heavy metal band. We feel called to the ministry before we feel called to music. I'd be surprised if Christian heavy metal became extremely popular, just because the message is so strong. Our message would remain strong and what we have to say now is what we'd have to say then—that the world needs Jesus."

I told Michael that I'd heard that they'd gigged together less than 20 times. I asked him if they felt prepared to take on a major tour. He answered yes to both questions and went on to tell where they planned on touring: "Wherever we can go. We're trying to get all over the United States. We just signed a European deal, so that's gonna be happening, hopefully in '87 or '88."

**Tell me about the new album.

"It was produced by David, Les and I. We recorded at Rockshire Records in Anaheim in 3-D studios again. Doug Doyle engineered again. It should be out early February of '87.

"An overview of the album is—and this we've heard from people besides ourselves—it's much heavier than the first record. We have a lot more faster tunes as a whole. People that are into the **BLACK SNAKE** vibe will probably really get off on this album a lot.

"I'm real happy with the production. Mark is an incredible drummer. I'm really anxious for people to hear Mark's drumming. The guy is just awesome. His meter is great. His chops are fabulous. He's really featured on songs like **SELF-DESTRUCTION** and **HEARTBEAT**. He's a good double-kicker. He's just super. He plays a big 30-piece kit. I'm real excited about having him in the group. He's added a lot for us.

"**BATTLE OF THE FLESH**. We pretty much redid it and put in some cool stuff towards the end of the song that's not like on the demo tape. It's got a lot of energy.

"The next one, **VAGRANT PEOPLE**—I really like this song. It's more of an anthem-type song at the end. David wrote it. Gosh. How do you describe music? It's just a big and powerful song. 'In your face'-type stuff. Real metal.

"**SELF-DESTRUCTION**. I wrote this song a couple of years ago. As a matter of fact, right around the same time I wrote **YOU LOSE**. I got so tired of people shaking their fists and blaming God for all the ills of the world and stuff. It's basically taken from the scripture that says, 'If you reject God's plan of salvation—basically the unpardonable sin of blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, rejecting Jesus and what He did on the cross—you're actually judging yourself. You'll be judging yourself on the judgement day.' It's a warning to the unbeliever that when you turn away, walk out of this concert or listen to this song or listen to the message of Christ at any time and reject it and don't believe it, then you've literally judged yourself by calling God a liar. It's a pretty 'no holds barred, in your face'-type thing. It's different than anything we've done before. It's kinda neat.

"**ALONE (IN SUICIDE)** kinda starts out mellow and kicks in.

It's just a song about what it is about being alone in suicide, just the futility. It's all a song addressing teenage suicide. It's a song about a guy that's reached the end of his rope. He's got no place else to turn. At the end of the song, of course, the message of salvation is presented and gives an option to the listener.

"**HEARTBEAT** is kind of a multi-faceted song dealing with prostitution. As I was writing the song, I began reading books like Hosea and stuff where the nation of Israel is parallel to a prostitute. It tells about how we sell ourselves out to whatever it might be. I realized, 'That's the church. That's us. That's you and me.' We can all be whores in a way. What's your price? What's my price? It kind of addresses that. It's a song about people knowing what's right, but doing what's wrong anyway. At the end of the song it gets back to the actual prostitute, the actual person that's rejected God, whose sin just keeps abounding and keeps going on. Eventually you lay there with nothing and there's just someone else there to take your place. It's a downer. Again, real strong message and stuff. We're lyrically stronger on this album I think, too. Not stronger necessarily, maybe, but heavy.

"Side two starts out with **EAT THE FLESH**. That comes from the Bread Of Life dissertation. Eat the flesh, drink the blood of Christ. It's a real metal song and it's got a Gregorian chorus in it. It's real different. Kind of a soldiery-type song, like **VAGRANT PEOPLE**.

"**HOLY FIRE** is an old Bloodgood song that we hadn't done for awhile. We wrote it back when we first started the band, the same time with **ANGUISH AND PAIN** and **BATTLE OF THE FLESH**. It kinda fell away. We didn't like the arrangement and other songs came up. We were getting ready to do the second record and we just took another look at it and Les wrote some new parts in it. We came back and redid the song and put in a real interesting rhythm pattern and ended up really liking the song. When it was all said and done, we got off in it and put it on the record. It's again looking at the alternative of serving the world, you know, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, Jesus coming in an baptizing with fire.

"**CRUCIFY** has been a real popular song. We've done it live for quite a while. It's about like a mini-rock opera. It's the trial of Jesus kind of through the eyes of Pontious Pilate. It's like a play with Roman guards and the crowd coming in and wanting to crucify Him. It's like Pilate's frustration of seeing the innocence of Christ and yet bending to the will of the mob. He sees that Jesus is guiltless, yet the crowd wants Him crucified. It's a real emotional song. It's a real pounder and real speed song. It just kinda builds through the tension where there's a lot of production on it and stuff, with voices coming in and out. Finally, close to the end of the song, Pilate just says, 'Okay. Take Him.' In utter frustration. 'Real emotional song. Les just kicked on this song, vocally. I'm really happy with it.

"It goes right into the song **THE MESSIAH**, which is a really different song. Another one that Les wrote. It's dealing with taking Jesus off the cross after He had died. I don't think anyone's ever done that before. Just taking Him gently off the cross and wiping His face off and preparing Him for burial. It's kind of a weeping thing. Then towards the end of the song, of course, Jesus raises from the grave and it turns

into a song of victory. It's the ballad on the album. We never set out to write ballads, it just came out. It's buttered up right against **CRUCIFY**. The people that we've played it for just kind of sit there with their eyes open. It's got a real big chorus like **ACCEPT THE LAMB**. David's guitar work on the album is really happening. He's really gone the next step, I think.

"Last, but not least, is **LIVEWIRE**. It's a celebration song. So, these three songs kind of fit in together. Of course, Livewire being Jesus Christ. The chorus is: 'Livewire, He's on fire'-type of thing. It's just like a raw, three-piece, no overdubs, screaming rock and roll song. Almost out of control, like a song off Van Halen I. It's great.

"I think the new album is overall heavier. I think we've stretched ourselves out a little bit more on this album, so it's still got the Bloodgood trademarks on it, if you want to call them that. I think it's real interesting. We got some really neat guitar solos that I think will surprise people and we have some production, all without synthesizer I might add. Reverse echoes and stuff like that. I think people are really gonna get off on it. We got some killer artwork on this thing too. We're gonna have a full-length poster coming out to match it front and back. It'll be real controversial, I'm sure.

"We're getting together a fan club in early '87. We've got lots of new stuff goin' on. Of course we'll have t-shirts coming out with the new album. We're selling some of Jeff Nicholson's 'Jesus is God' t-shirts. It's gonna be a great witnessing tool. The ones that we sell, of course, have the 'Bloodgood, Metal Missionaries' on the back."

From what you said about **HOLY FIRE, I get an idea about where you stand. It seems to me like a lot of the people who are really into ministry and are really stepping out there are really living in, you know, which I believe is the full truth of the Bible, the fact that Jesus' power through the Holy Spirit is here for us. I think that's true with a lot of guys who are in the ministry that are reaching out. Do you guys ever face conflict with people who don't get into that?

"I can't say that I've ever gotten into a doctrinal or theological argument with anybody over that. I've been around the block a few times, you know. I've been to Bible college and all that kind of stuff and yeah, we believe that the Holy Spirit operates now just like He did 2,000 years ago.

"I believe in all the gifts of the Holy Spirit, as does everybody else in the band. I think you probably find a lot of that in metal, because it is a very expressive art-form anyway. The more charismatic guys are probably into it anyway. Quite frankly, I don't want to go out on the stage without really believing in the full power of the Holy Spirit, man. I'd be scared. He's active and He's out there. We look for everything in our ministry. I hope that someday we can reach out and see a kid and know where he stands and what his afflictions are and just say it right from the stage. I pray that God would even begin to use us for healing people, man. Why not? I'd love it if Les was reaching out to the crowd and people getting healed. That would be great. We've just gone before the Lord and said, 'Look, Lord. Use us for whatever you want.' We're not limiting ourselves to being evangelists. If God wants to use our ministry in any way He sees fit, man, we're ready to do it, Lord willing.

It's His gifts anyway. We're not out naming it and claiming it or anything, but we really believe that if God wants to use us in that area, that we're open enough to hear Him tell us and we'll go out looking forward to doing it. That's the name of the game. You've got to equip kids too. I want to have a complete message. We have a lot of spiritual babies out there, because they don't know the whole gospel. They've stopped at the cross. They don't know about the resurrection yet and the power that comes through becoming a believer."

**I'll agree with you in that. That God would use you in that area.

"Yeah, but not just us. Everybody. All the bands. You get called into the ministry and you think, 'I'm going to go out and tell people the gospel message. Maybe God's got more than that. Who knows? I'm not saying He does, but a lot of times He does. There's another message there. You don't just have to limit yourself to that, you know? Just to the real basic gospel message. But, of course, there's so much power in that, that it's hard to ever get away from it and I hope we never do. That's where it's all at.'"

**Tell me about the personnel change.

"It's kind of funny. J.T.'s been out of the band for 11 months, since way before even the album came out. It was such an old news item to us, that I didn't even think about the fact that most people thought that he was still in the band. I said, 'Oh man, I better get on top of that.'"

**Why did he leave?

"Well, he's just got different things to do with his life, basically. He's not even in bands or anything like that anymore. It was just basically a parting of the way. He's got things that I really think he has to work out and other interests he needs to pursue besides being a musician. Les and J.T. just went out to dinner a couple days ago and stuff, so ya know, there's no ill feelings or anything like that. He's got other things he needs to do in his life right now. We hope the best for him."

**What would you most like to say to unsaved headbangers?

"I've said what I wanted to say to 'em in our music. If I was a mean guy, I'd say, 'Look at what Jesus has to say and realize that rock and roll will not save you. Partying will not save you. Having Kiss posters or Maiden posters will not save you—or Bloodgood posters for that matter.' They've got to see the other side of the coin and realize really that they're being deceived. There's more to it than what Motley Crue's telling them about. Of course if the guy's into black metal, then I have a whole lot of things to say to him, as far as dealing with the devil. Most guys who listen to rock and roll and heavy metal are not really satanic worshippers and stuff, but at the same time, the people that they are into are generally serving Satan—whether they know it or not. I'd just say, 'Think for yourself and take a look at what's happening. Listen to what the guys that you're into are saying to you. Where do you go with that stuff? When the chips are down, like the letters I get: the kids don't know where they're gonna turn. They have every Iron Maiden album ever done. They have every Priest album ever published. It never helps 'em. It's like in the Old Testament. When Israel just walked away from Him. He said, 'Okay. I'll tell you what: You guys start praying to your idols. Pray to your

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Alliance

My first exposure to Alliance was at The Labor Day Christian Music Festival last year in Austin. They played some good Christian cover tunes by such pop artists as Amy Grant, The Front and First Strike. A year later and ten times better has them playing almost all originals with a tight and polished sound. They play a pop-rock style that edges close to Nightranger's sound off and on.

They cut a short demo tape last summer that has gotten some local airplay and lots of favorable responses. The style they play is predictable and commercial, but they play it with such enthusiasm that they may get picked up by a good record label someday.

As soon as I heard their skilled double leads, I knew I wanted to interview them in Heaven's Metal. This interview can hopefully give you a good glimpse of their hearts before you get a chance to hear their music.

**There's probably a Christian band in every big city. A lot of subscribers are probably in bands. What kind of advice would you give them?

"Number one," says guitarist Rex Schnelle, "is Jesus all the way. Get into the Word. Get into prayer. Music is not lord. Music is only a way that you glorify God. It's a spiritual language. It should only be used in a context of giving praise to God and continuing out His ministry through you. You have to get a perspective on your spiritual life. You have to be willing to give it up where you're at and say, 'If music were to go tomorrow, I would do whatever God wants me to do.' That's all there is to it."

"I think God gives you a basic talent for music too. You just can't be tone deaf and not be able to play a lick and go through that for five years and still not be able to play a lick and seriously consider a music ministry. There's definitely a talent there. Musicians just happen to be some of the luckiest people in the world—to be able to know that language of music, which is a gift of God. The thing is, it gets to be a battle when Satan tries to corrupt it."

"Number one is 'get in touch with God.' Number two is 'keep at it.' Play everywhere you can. Pray that your music would be effective. Don't entertain anybody. Go for a change. Some of the worst times we've played have been some of the best ministry times we've had. God uses you in spite of yourself. Pray for the souls that are lost."

"If I could only say one thing," says drummer and vocalist Scott Cannon, "I would say, 'Prayer's the most important.' This band doesn't do anything without prayin'. We don't practice without prayin' first. It just keeps us putting it back on God. Everytime we take something on, we put it back in His hands. We want to make sure He's involved. We want to make sure He's the center of it. We went through probably a year practicing where we'd pray for five or ten minutes or we'd start practicing awhile and say, 'Oh! We didn't pray. Let's pray real quick.' It took us a long time to really realize the power of prayer. I guess it took us seeing some answers before we started taking it seriously, realizing that 'the more we pray, the more results we're gonna see.' There's a direct relation to how much we pray to how effective we are."

"I really feel like God won't use a band unless He can make it clear that He's the One working through the band," says rhythm guitarist Warren Cannon. "In our group, our biggest growth has been within ourselves. The band doesn't grow until we grow. Spiritually, we haven't played for any more people than we could handle. We've always prayed that He wouldn't put us out there 'till we're ready. He gives us the things to pray for. We ask God to change our hearts all the time."

"Another big factor is fellowship," says Scott. "God has risen up our friends that support our group, who we can never say enough about. Without them this group would not be at all where it's at. People that help us set up, people that pray for us, organize, donate vehicles, gas and time. We never asked 'em to do it. They did it on God's initiative. I'd encourage anyone who knows that they're called to music ministry to first seek out a fellowship, a church body for a prayer support. Seek out a place in the fellowship where you can serve. Honor your parents. Listen to what they have to say. They're a lot wiser than you are. Even if you're in disagreement with them."

"We were about to take out a loan for the band. They said, 'We don't think it's a good idea.' They were right. You shouldn't say, 'Okay God, you've got to honor this because we did it in your name.' You just can't do that. You can't intimidate God."

"If you're calling yourself a Christian band and teaching and ministering to people, you better be getting teaching yourself. You better be getting fed somewhere. You just can't go out there and try to be an island. The body of Christ has to work together and build each other up. Always get as much feeding as you give out."

"Some of the older, more traditional Christian people hear about Christian rock and, of course, slam it. We as Christians and we as Christian rock performers have to accept those people and love 'em more than they love us. If they slam us, we have to turn right around and give 'em the other cheek and say, 'We love you and respect what you say, but we can't deny what God has called us to do.' Build bridges whenever possible. Don't ever burn 'em."

"We don't say, 'We're in a Christian rock band and therefore this doesn't apply to us,'" says Warren. "There's no shortcuts. We're Christians and we don't compromise and say, 'We're in a Christian band, therefore we're gonna do this or that and that part of the Bible doesn't apply to us.' It all applies to us."

**How can the Heaven's Metal reader pray for ya?

"For a more effective, powerful ministry. We've got to be gospel salesmen. We've got to make those kids want what we've got. It's definitely up to the Holy Spirit to call 'em there and it's definitely up to that commitment, but the group has to do the presentation. The group has to tell the story. The Spirit will take care of the rest. We need to have that spear sharpened to make that blow to separate the bone and marrow, the soul and the spirit. The Word of God has got to seep into the innermost part of that person while they're listening to it. We want to be a clearer picture of the best God has to offer."

An Apostle is a disciple endowed with power from on high. Apostle the group is undoubtedly fashioned in the same mold. They rock from the musically hot and spicey city of Jacksonville, Florida. Most bands from Jacksonville have to compete with the legends of Lynyrd Skynyrd and The Outlaws, who have set high-quality musical standards for others to follow. Playing in this city is going to produce professionalism in a group. Apostle uses this skill to proclaim Jesus to our generation.

Their music has the necessary speed, talent and energy to be classified as metal in anyone's book. The only possible problem for Apostle could be the fact that there are so many metal bands out there already. I'm not sure if there's too many labels searching for Christian metal bands right now. It would be nice if Word and Sparrow took a few under their wings. Considering Apostle's talent, they should overcome this possible problem. Nevertheless, we will surely hear more from Apostle in the future.

"They're a blend of all the right influences," quips roving record reviewer Ezekiel Wade.

The riffs on their demo tape are sharp, which fits very well with the sharp piercing vocals of Matt Harding. The vocals produce an emotional platform for the words to move right into the hearts of the listener. Matt's a screamer; and that's fine with us, right?

This band is not afraid to let you hear one of their instruments wail on a solo. The guitar takes off on its own often, while the drums occasionally introduce songs—like *Conquerors*.

One of their ballads, *You And Me*, has a captivating guitar intro. The guitar lead, that identifies this song as a metal ballad as opposed to a normal ballad, cries through a distortion box that hasn't been made famous yet. It is unusual enough that it might not make it on the album that they hope to release. It'll probably be cleaned up in the remix. Hopefully a good label will afford Apostle some money to work with in the studio. Let's pray for it.

Apostle is: Matt Harding, 29, on lead guitar and vocals; Dave McKee, 23, on drums; Mark Berero, 20, on bass.

The following interview with Matt was done at Jesus People USA in Chicago.

**Why are you guys called Apostle?

"We've been Apostle about two and one half years. We just prayed and asked God what He wanted us to name the band. We started looking through concordances and different things and felt that Apostle was the name for us. So far, we've pretty much stuck with it."

**The guitar work on your demo is phenomenal. How long have you been playing?

"I've been playing guitar since I was 14 or 15, which is about 15 years."

**How long have you known the Lord? What brought you to Him?

"Well, I've been saved three years. I was playing in several heavy metal bands prior to my conversion. I played in a lot of bar bands in Florida for probably about six or seven years before I got saved.

"Just a lot of people started sharing the Lord with me. I was in a band called Screamer and I started looking at the material that we were playin': a lot of Judas Priest, Ozzy

Osbourne, Ronnie James Dio and stuff like that. I looked at the albums of the cover tunes that we were doing and I just knew that what I was singing about was wrong. One day I took a look at Dio's album, *Holy Diver*. It had a picture of a huge demon on a mountain with a chain wrapped around his hand. At the other end of the chain was a priest, drowning in the sea. I said 'This looks like the devil's in control.'

"When I was a kid, I was brought up in a Christian home. My parents were devote Methodists and I knew about Jesus, but I never made a commitment to serve Him. I knew that what I was doing—partying, and the music I was playing was definitely wrong. Eventually I saw the light and gave my life to the Lord."

**For many of your songs you just scream scripture. Do you have any feedback on that?

"Well, I just really felt that, 'If you're gonna get the message of the gospel across, what better way to do it than if you sing scripture and verse?' Back when I was first debating on it, I first thought, 'Well gosh man, if I sing scripture and verse, it'll blow everybody out. It'll be too heavy, they won't be able to handle it and it'll turn 'em off from our material.' But then as I started praying and spending time with the Lord, I just really felt in my heart that that was a deception of the devil.

"I would, like, worship God and stuff, and fast and then write songs. It seemed like everytime lyric content would come out, it'd be scripture and verse. It seemed to fit the music so perfect, you know? It just started to flow and happen that way, so I've pretty much been going that direction ever since. I think probably maybe one song on the album has got line-type lyrics. Basically, everything else is scripture and verse.

"It's real effective. We've played a lot of secular gigs. People don't seem to have a problem with it at all. They like the music and they like the band. They just listen to the lyrics and it kinda comes along with the package. They don't realize that the Word of God is going to their heart. Whatever scripture it is, that God's saying in His Word, it's not going to return void. If it's a salvation scripture or healing scripture, or whatever the case may be, it's gettin' down in their heart, it's gonna take care of business.

**Speaking of the album, you just got done recording at Tone Zone.

"Right. We just finished the tracks. You know, the basic: rhythm tracks, vocal overdubs, guitar overdubs and stuff. Glenn Kaiser's producing the record. Roger Heiss is engineering it and will probably co-produce some of it. I think Glenn is gonna shop it for us. He's talked to several record companies and they're pretty much 'Let's check it out.'"

**Secular or Christian labels, or both?

"Well, Glenn's talked mostly right now to Christian labels, but he's talked to a couple of secular folks. We're just praying to see who gets it. We've prayed for probably two years for this album. Since we're from Florida, and Chicago's such a long way away, we really had to seek the Lord and pray and just get everything down to His will. He just had to make a way for us to come, because we don't want to do it on our own power. It pretty much had to be the Lord's timing. It's really been an anointed time. We've had



ZION

Zion. It is the city of David. It is Israel. It is us, God's people. It is the eternal city in which His sheep shall dwell someday. It is also, unfortunately, the name of several Christian ministries, particularly rock bands. This Zion, hailing from Sioux Falls, South Dakota, was the first Zion to make a heavy metal noise that was heard across the world. Their **ROCK FOR ETERNITY** tape found its way in the hands of eager Christian headbangers everywhere soon after its release two years ago.

"Zion formed in 1981," says lead singer Rex Scott. "We all had known each other prior to coming to know the Lord. Dave saw the emptiness of the whole rock scene at the same time I did. Dave Moore's band, Southwind, was starting to back up national acts and so was Rox, our band.

"We were backing up BIO one night before a sold house and it was like an audible voice that I heard say, 'I won't be doing that again,' as I walked off the stage. This just freaked me out. It was totally opposite of what was going on around me: record company people there and everybody was just 'hype, hype, hype!' I told one of the guys in the band about it and got laughed at.

"Bon Scott, of AC-DC, died and I called their management and set up an audition. At the same time I was getting more desperate each day. While I was waiting to hear back from AC-DC, I started goin' to my folk's church and got saved.

"I immediately called up the other guys in Rox and said, 'I'm quitting the band. I'm gonna start following Jesus now.' They just go, 'What? You've gotta be kidding me! Jesus? Oh Rex! We talked about people like that. What are you doing with fanatics?'

"Zion formed and proceeded to lose thousands of dollars," laughs Rex. "I could go into hours and hours of stories that would make you burst out laughing, like losing our bus 500 miles away from home! You know, using the money we made at the gig to somehow get us and all our equipment home and leaving the bus. All kinds of crazy stuff."

**What are your biggest struggles faced as a band?

"As a Christian band, I'd say there are two main things. The first is unity within the group, because you're in a four-person band. You have four separate personalities and some people are leaders and some people are followers. If you have more than one songwriter in the group, which we have, it

can cause friction and stuff. You learn to start giving and taking in the Lord like I never have before.

"Secondly, to be able to be in a position as a group of four individuals to follow God's will and always put Him first in whatever we do as a band. I think the hardest thing to do is to lay what you want to do down and allow the Lord to do it.

"Just because you're in a Christian rock band doesn't mean that you're gonna go record an album. It doesn't mean you're gonna go full-time. It doesn't mean you're gonna play big 'mega-concerts.' I mean not even right away. I mean maybe not eventually, that that might not happen. To really be able to lay down your desires continually—it's hard to do, but it's the main thing that has to be done, or else everything that you're gonna be doing is in the flesh. God will still use you, because you're a Christian, but you're going to be hindering what God can do through you. I think those two things are probably the toughest things."

**What are the greatest joys as a band?

"The greatest joy, playing in our band especially, is to see somebody come to the Lord. But right along upside of that is knowing that what we're doing as a band is in the will of God and that we're not out there guessing what God wants us to do. It's a slow process and it takes a lot of patience and waiting and persevering and prayer and stuff. God can blow doors open and God can shut doors. You never have to force any doors yourself. That's the ticket. We've learned that the hard way, forcing doors open. You gotta wait on God. I see these other bands. I read their interviews in your magazine and other magazines and stuff and you get the whole gamut: you get the extremes; the balanced; and you get all the way to the other extreme. You get bands that, it's totally almost seemingly that they're 'if we don't get the big record companies like so and so, nothings gonna happen'-type thing. 'You've gotta make it happen, blah, blah, blah.' I just don't agree with that. You know? Where's God gonna get the glory in what you're doing if you're doing it all? It's just gonna end up in frustration.

"That kind of stuff can be avoided if you just rest in the peace of God. He says in I Peter 5:6,7 that, 'If you humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time. Casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you.' We can be in a rock band and not have to pursue careers with anxiety and that type of thing. It's allowing God to do it in His time. Allowing God to be glorified and allowing God to be the leader of the band."

**What do you think a heathen headbanger needs to know that, say, a heathen preppie doesn't? What sort of communication of the gospel is unique for a headbanger?

"That's the blessed power that God has given through music. In our lyrics, we feel that we're geared to that type of audience. Therefore we don't feel like we have to introduce 'em to a higher thought to get 'em to really think. We just hit them blunt in the face with what we have and make it very easily understandable, because our audience ranges from 6, 7 and 10-year olds all the way up into the twenties. I don't want to underestimate our audience at all. I know that they can get into lyrics that make people think. We do make 'em think, but it's not in an allegorical-sense necessarily. We try to keep everything fore-front. I like the Bloodgood-style

of lyric writing best of all. That type of just real 'straight-forward, taking the sword out and hacking away at darkness'-type of lyrics."

**What should a group of Christian musicians know before they attempt to form a band?

"First of all, just because you can play an instrument doesn't mean God has called you to play in a band. As Christians, we're called to serve. To serve the lost, to serve Christians, to serve, to serve, to serve. Jesus wants us to be servants of one another and be vehicles of His love.

"I heard that Jesus People USA will, if you come and say, 'I feel led to play in a Christian rock band,' tell you, 'That's great. You put your guitar away for a year and help us serve here and then we'll see what happens.'

"That's great because you may think that just because you're a musician and maybe you know people that are starting a Christian rock band, that you should be in that band.

"What are you doing right now in your life? Are you just doing nothing, just waiting for the big Christian rock band or are you serving where God has you to serve now? Are you being responsible with what God has given you now?

"With our rhythm guitarist leaving and moving to Minneapolis, God has called us back, reminding us to get back to our first love and what we were doing when we were first saved. That was leading worship at church and stuff like that and running the soundboard. Simple things like that—that don't seem to mean too much—those are the things that God wants us to be doing.

"I think that even if you are a roadie in a Christian rock band, you have to balance out what you're doing as far as being able to serve in your community and church and stuff, compared to playing in rock. I think that even if you're in a band, you should look for places you can serve other than your band. Working with the poor, going down to the soup kitchen in your town and serving to the street people, that's where it's really at. When you balance out what you're doing, you don't get so much of a one-sided vision. It really helps melt your vision to what Jesus wants you to be doing. You're more open to see what He wants to do."

**What do you think about the "guys looking effeminate" issue?

"That's a real tough one. Scripture is clear as to what we're doing. Individually we're not to take on the role of a woman or anything like that, but God doesn't look at the outside as He looks in the inside. That's where it starts. You just gotta be careful. You just can't approach it from a secular viewpoint and put on your makeup and just do whatever you want and go wherever you want. People see you. You've just got to be alert continually that you're not getting to the point where you're causing people to stumble. Your prayer life: I guess it would come back to that. Keep it in check.

"We wear real flashy stuff too and a little bit of makeup, but it's pretty much theater-style. It's rock theater. It's not to look effeminate or anything. A lot of people would say certain bands look effeminate, where, in the eyes of another person, they don't.

"You just can't come out and say, 'It's wrong,' because I don't believe that. We just have to be responsible to our own convictions and what we see from God in the Word. Try not to make people stumble unnecessarily with what we're doing, but that doesn't mean that we can be intimidated just because a

bunch of people are saying, 'It's wrong,' and attacking us vehemently and unjustifiably with no Word to back up what they're saying."

**What is Zion gonna do in the near future?

"Zion right now is being looked at by two record companies. Last year a record label offered us a contract, which we turned down. They wanted to take our **ROCK FOR ETERNITY** tape and remix the 8-track master tapes, which we knew were not of quality—even if they were to be remixed. We couldn't agree to that, plus they wanted us to play far more dates than we could obligate ourselves to.

"We recorded that thing in a church basement. Even the delays, like on **TIME IS RUNNING OUT**, we used fake echoes. We couldn't even afford to rent a stinkin' delay at that time. When there's repeats, it's just me going, 'hello, hello, hello.' It was barbaric!

"Since then I went in and remixed three of our favorite songs off there: **JESUS LOVES, YOUR LOVE** and **ROCK FOR ETERNITY**, the title cut. Those are what we're shopping the record companies with. Record companies have picked up on it and really like it. Although I'm the drummer, I went in and added some more guitar with whammy bar and stuff to make it just a little more eightyish-sounding. Everyone compares us to AC-DC. I don't think that that's all that bad, because there's really no one else out there doing an AC-DC thing. I just like that style of music, whether AC-DC would've came along or not. I was raised on it. My grandpa was honky tonk and played the guitar, you know? A lot of the same riffs that Angus plays, that's the music my grandpa played and liked and listened to—only in the old-fashioned way and not blasting Marshall stacks style. But the same blues riffs and everything.

"We're looking at going in the studio. We've got two albums worth of stuff that we could come in to record. We want to really bad. We're just waiting on God. That's all I can say. We're just waiting on God to see what is going to happen, as far as recording and a record company. As for our three-piece status, we could do some switching around and go four-piece, because I can play rhythm guitar. I do write the majority of the material and we do have people that wanna play with us, but we're not gonna make any jumps. We're just waiting on God to show us. He might want us to stay three-piece for eternity and just be a regional rock band or He may want to do more, and that's totally up to Him."

**Is the sound gonna be the same?

"Yeah. We're gonna have better production this time around. It will be 24-track. Since the release of the first tape, it takes on quite a different sound. We're just a little bit more of a modernized power-slog rock in the vein of AC-DC. A little departure from what AC-DC does, with a little bit of a synth added here and there."

**What changes are in the making for Zion?

"Because our rhythm guitarist's father was a pastor of a church, Bruce did a lot of work outside his church. The rest of us went to another church, so we were kind of combined between the two churches. Now that he has left, we are gonna try to be tied in more as an outreach of our church. We wanna be able to spread out some of the opportunity for layman to minister at our concerts. In that respect, we're gonna be more church-oriented as far as the background behind us.

cont'd on pg 19



I don't think any of you needs to read a review of the new Stryper album in order to decide whether or not you're gonna buy it. I'm convinced that the release of a new Stryper album means the release of \$9 from your pockets. Knowing this takes the pressure off of having to sell you the new Stryper album.

TO HELL WITH THE DEVIL is a major test for the boys in yellow and black. This is the first album they've released where they had to solely rely on unproven material. When they released their debut EP, they just put on vinyl songs they'd been playing in concert. **SOLDIERS UNDER COMMAND** was much the same way. **TOGETHER FOREVER**, **FIRST LOVE**, **SURRENDER** and the title track are all songs that Stryper had road tested since their clubbing days. Writing new songs has got to be a little scary. With old songs, at least you know your live audiences already enjoyed them.

This album seems to firmly establish Stryper's sound and direction. It has a few metal screamers, a few ballads and a few pop, melodic-metal songs.

This long-awaited piece of vinyl starts off with **ABYSS**, which sounds similar to—but not the same as—the synthesizer intro to concerts, which they used during their **YELLOW AND BLACK ATTACK** tour.

The title track is meaty and tough. They don't try to act classy or real melodic on this one. The guitar leads can't help but be slightly melodic throughout the song, but Michael wrestles with his vocal chords. These first two songs have a predictable life: **ABYSS** will probably open the show; and the crowds will surely be invited to sing/shout along to the choruses of "To hell with the devil!"

The next tune, **CALLING ON YOU**, will probably be the first video released from the album—according to Janice Sweet. It's a melodic, pop-metal tune in the same vein as **REACH OUT**. This song, along with two others off the album, will probably raise the ole' question: "Is he talking about a girl or the Lord?" This reviewer can't answer that question, but I can say this: "Shouldn't a love song for a loved one be interchangeable with a love song for God?" I said, "love song for God, not worship song." Worship of a girl is clearly idolatry, but self-denying, Christ-like love for a girl is of God. I personally don't get uptight if a Christian musician writes a love song for a girl. If it's coming out of his heart and is right-on with God's guidelines for relationships, it is a good thing.

Record reviews can be the funnest avenue for preaching, honestly.

The next song, **FREE**, is undeniably Stryper. You could hear this song on the radio and immediately know it's Stryper. Praise God, they have their own sound.

Lyricaly, the song is powerful. I am learning and believing that each word we speak has great eternal and spiritual signifigance. In Luke 13 Jesus freed a lady from a demonic spirit that she had for 18 years—just by saying, "You are freed from your sickness." He has given us this authority as believers. I believe that the words to this song are releasing listeners all over the world from spiritual oppression. If you have their live video or get a chance to

see them live, notice how Michael ends up **FIRST LOVE** in concert. He stretches out his hand to the audience and says, "You are free, You're free."

I called Stryper's office and asked if Michael believed in and was aware of this. "At first he did these things because they sounded good, but now is realizing that God planned it that way," was their response. They have had people report to them of demons leaving people in the audience. With much prayer, we can see Stryper heal and deliver huge audiences under the authority of Jesus. This is an area that the apostles moved in and one that the body of Christ is starting to learn and grow in. Let's really pray, okay?

HONESTLY is another gentle ballad a la **MY LOVE I'LL ALWAYS SHOW**. This song exemplifies many godly characteristics of a righteous relationship: the commitments of friendship, reliability, loyalty and honesty.

THE WAY is Oz Fox's gift of songwriting to this album. He forces Michael to sing in a similar key to many of Bruce Dickinson of Iron Maiden's songs. Oz found a catchy riff to use as his rhythm and he keeps the song going at eighty miles an hour. He throws in some of his vibrato bar-bending sounds that scream for attention. "Rockin' for the One Who is the Rock," is the truthful chorus belted out here. This song should please the Iron Maiden audience without coming across as a blatant attempt to sound like 'em.

SING-ALONG SONG starts off with a Prodigal-sounding pop synthesizer intro, but then the guitars come in. This is really different from anything they've ever done. The chorus invites us to sing along: "Whoa-o-o-o whoa owowo la, la."

HOLDING ON is a commercial radio hit for sure. Stryper is sounding commercial, but they do it in a way that doesn't turn you off. At least this writer. It's probably because they've always held this style all along. It's not like they've sprung something new on us.

ROCKIN' THE WORLD is a good rhythm-ridden rocker that travels fast. This is probably the best rockin' worship song released since **JESUS WILL REIGN** from Darrell Mansfield's **REVELATION** album. It's a self-proclamation of what Stryper does: "Rocking the world for You—Holy One."

ALL OF ME is another ballad that uses the "is that really Stryper using keyboards"—synthesizer.

MORE THAN A MAN rounds off the album, leaving a heavy metal taste in your mouth and a ringing in your ears. It is a straightforward presentation of who Jesus Christ is. "Anyone who asks shall receive/ Jesus in your heart...more than a man, God Almighty/ He created you." This song lifts up Jesus to where He belongs—on the throne. It glorifies our King!

Overall, I'd say Stryper is expanding their audience to steal all those Journey fans that are going to hell and still feeding us metal-heads enough metal to keep us loyal.

For those who are interested: Columbia Pictures Publications is releasing a songbook of 16 Stryper songs; The December issue of **Metal Edge** has an exclusive interview with Tim Gaines, while the January guitar-special issue will feature Oz Fox; and **TO HELL WITH THE DEVIL** has been released with limited edition album covers. The secular release has a dramatic painting of four angels throwing the devil into the pit, while the Christian bookstore release has a black cover with the title written on it. Interesting eh?

money. Seek your gods and see if they deliver you. And they won't.' And really, those are their gods. Go ahead and pray to an Iron Maiden poster and see what happens. Nothing's gonna happen, man. But you pray to my God and things will happen. The fact is: Jesus is the only God and the only way and the only truth. My challenge has always been: 'Give Jesus a try. Ask Him to prove Himself to you and He will. Ask God if He's real, if He's really there, and He'll reveal Himself to ya. God doesn't have deaf ears.'

"That's what's exciting about being a Christian heavy metal band. We can go out there with any band in the world and I have no fear, because I serve the living God and not the dead one. It's great. There's power in there. It's not our power. It's the power of Christ."

**What would you most like to say to the Christian headbangers?

"Almost a similar thing. I see a lot of Christian headbangers that are thinking that that's an end in itself—being into Christian heavy metal. It's not. I'd like to see more of them using the tool for their friends. Take the Barren Cross album, take the Bloodgood album, take the Stryper album and use it, man. The kids that are using it are seeing results.

"They've also got to realize too that Bloodgood, we're not on a crusade to transform people into being fans of heavy metal. I could really care less what kind of music people are into. What we care is whether they're into Jesus Christ. Really, to put all music into it's proper perspective. That's very important.

"As far as a word of encouragement, God is using heavy metal and it's effective. I get so many letters: 'I took your tape to this party and played it.' and 'I've got a friend here that isn't a Christian, but he loves your music and as a result, I've been able to tell him about Jesus.' Use those things. There's not enough time to have these big huge Christian heavy metal record collections and think that that's worth anything. It's not. Use that collection, man, to tell people about Jesus. God's given it to you as a tool. Entertainment's great. I've got nothing against it and I have a huge collection myself. It's a great tool man, so use it as effectively as you can."

**What do you pray about most often?

"I personally just pray that the Lord keeps my eyes on Him. I always feel like I have the faith to step out of the boat and walk on the water like Peter did. Also like Peter, it's really easy for me to take my eyes off the Lord and start sinkin'. My prayer, especially because I'm responsible for the band and I'm in that position of authority, I just pray that God keeps me right where He wants me to be. I don't ever want to stray off the path and sit there and go, 'Hey! How'd I get here?' That's always my constant prayer when I get up. I know where I need to be each day. I kinda feel like the rudder steering the ship. That's probably my most consistent prayer. Along with that, of course, everybody else in the band. I always try to lift them up in prayer each day."

**How can the Heaven's Metal reader pray for ya?

"Fruit on the road," Les tells Mike. "Fruit for the band," expounds Mike. "That God would just continue to use us in every way and we wouldn't limit ourselves by how God wants to use us.

"I'm such a believer in prayer and the power of prayer. We don't even know how to use it, man. I think, if people just pray for us in general. If they would just remember us

consistently. That would do more for us than anything.

"I know when people are prayin' for us, man—and that's no lie. You come against things and you know the reason that you got out of it is because there are people back home praying for you.

"Each of the guys in the band are closely tied to their own church. My church supports my wife and I as a missionary family, as a matter of fact. That's what we are. I know that if I'm in Albuquerque, New Mexico, I know there's people back in Seattle praying for me. If I know that there's people that read Heaven's Metal that are lifting up Bloodgood daily, man it means everything in the world. When you're out there and you're by yourself, you're on the road or the side of the road and your muffler's hangin' off and your car's overheating, you know? You need people just prayin' for ya. I'd just say, 'Pray for Bloodgood. If the Lord lays something on your heart, who knows what it might be, just lift it up in prayer.'

"I really believe that: You begin praying for a person and God will begin to direct your prayers. I don't care what people pray for, I just want 'em to pray for us. Just pray for the band and let the Lord lead 'em."

**Where can I see your video? Have you distributed it to any shows?

"No we haven't. The reason we haven't is that most of the audio has been taken off of a little teeny condensor mike built on the camera. We haven't done anything professional enough to want to release it yet. We have tentative plans now, but when we get back from our first tour, which will be starting in mid-December and looks like taking us through March, Lord willing, we wanna get back and do a live, full-length concert video back in Seattle here. We're negotiating. It's tentative, but we're trying to get a three man camera crew here and a good director and actually doing a full-length video.

"Right now we're really not interested in doing one three-minute video. We'd like to do a full-length video that presents the band as we are from start of the show to finish. It'll not only be a 'Hey! Gee, here's a Bloodgood video,' but there's again another tool that we can use. You can sit your friend down and say, 'Hey man. Check out this heavy metal band' and there you go. There's the whole concert. The whole gospel message is there, not just one three and a half minute song or whatever. There's something you could pray about. I'd really like to see that becoming a reality. If it does, we'll actually distribute it like a record. Hopefully during the summer or something like that."

**When's the rapture gonna happen?

"As soon as God wants it to. I think the gates are creaking open now. I think the time is soon. I believe we're at a point now where all the major prophecies that need to be fulfilled have been fulfilled. I think it could happen at any time.

"Getting back to my message to the readers of your magazine, the Christian headbangers—Hey man! The time is short. Don't take for granted anything. Life is short even if we're gonna be here the full gambit, you know? Begin to live each day as if it could be the last one, because it might be, man. There's no time to sit around thinking, 'What are you gonna be doin' ten years from now?' Who knows man? Hopefully we'll be home with the Lord in ten years. Fine with me. I'm ready to leave."

JERUSALEM

Jerusalem is a fine gem extracted from the country of Sweden. Combine their uncompromised stance with their tremendous musical ability and you have one of the most powerful bands in the music world.

They are possibly the Led-Zeppelin of Christian music. They'll probably never reach the popularity levels that Zep did, because they will not retreat from their stance as bondservants of the Living God.

If a group of record executives and soldiers walked in on a Jerusalem rehearsal and promised them world-wide distribution and fame in exchange for a slightly compromised message and threatened to shoot them if they didn't compromise, I'm sure the band would stand up and deliver a fiery sermon before they were executed for their uncompromised faith.

The following interview catches these servants near the end of a one year leave of musical service for His Majesty.

****How has your time off been?**

"Very good. We had a real good time to get the band together and get our vision together too. We are much more grounded in Jesus than we ever have been.

"We're starting next year on Europe. We start our new record too."

****What has the band together, and you individually, learned?**

"First of all, we learned that we have to give a straight message to the people. We learned that, as Jesus told us, 'to heal the sick and cast out demons and to preach the gospel,' very straight, very up-front. That's very much grounded in our hearts now. Much more. It's not only, you know, in our minds. It's in our hearts too and that's most important. Also we learned that we are more than conquerors in Jesus Christ. It's not just words I'm saying, you know? We mean that."

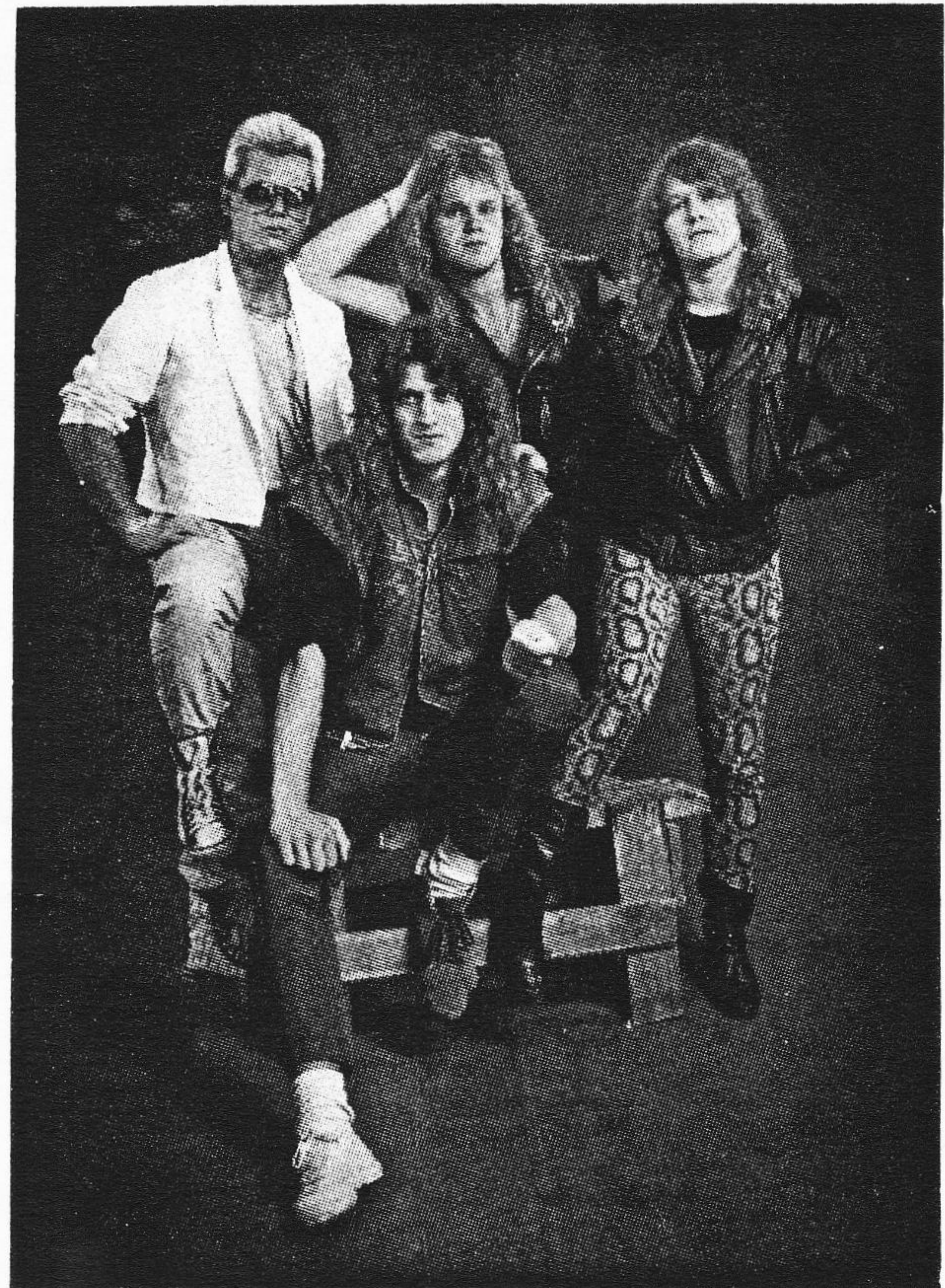
****I'm excited, because I know you were already well-grounded before you took this time off. I'm just thrilled to know that you're growing even more.**

"There is a vision for the band that God gave me from the beginning, when we started 11 years ago. That's been the main thing that kept us on. I felt that this time we took off was a new step for us. I mean, really, Europe—Sweden and Scandinavia is shaking. We are on the front of a big revival, I feel."

****You may not be reaching millions of people, but the people you are reaching are being ministered to in-depth. Your ministry is not shallow. It's very deep and life-changing. You're anointed of God. What do you feel God has given you to tell the body of Christ?**

"I feel that many Christians today are under condemnation and confused. They don't know what they really believe in. The reason why they don't know what they believe in is because they don't have fellowship with God and they don't read His Word. They don't see His Word as a power in itself and food for the spiritual man. Most Christians today have it in their heads, but they haven't revelation knowledge. That's another big difference in knowing the things in your mind, intellectually, and knowing it in your heart. That's the difference between having things happening by faith and having it not happen.

"Most Christians today need the knowledge of God and they really need to know what they believe in. That's why I don't have a message that will condemn people or put them into more



discouragement, putting them into more condemnation. God's message is very straight. It tells us to do things. Mark 16 says we are all to go out and preach the gospel and cast out demons and lay our hands on the sick and they will be healed and speak in new tongues and all these things. Most of the times we just discuss these things and we talk about them, but nobody's doing it. That's what I feel.

"I want to encourage Christians to start, really dare, to believe what God says."

****Do you feel like, as a Christian band, that you are instrumental in reaching the lost? Do you feel like you're reaching lost people now? Is there difference between European and American audiences for you?**

"I think that Europe today is, as I said before, things are happening here. It's in a spiritual world first. The whole continent, all the countries you go to, people are hungry. You can just feel it. You know? You speak to them and preach good news to them, they take it to their hearts. Since we came out of the school, just in Sweden, almost 200 people came to Christ. For Sweden, that's very many people. It's not like in U.S., where people are coming up and asking for salvation and they do it for the fifth time or the tenth time, because nobody tells them how to walk on with God. They just think that they have to go up to be saved everyday. Not true. That's one difference, but also it's a spiritual atmosphere and a time, a spiritual time. It's a time of seeking here in Europe, which I felt, it effects the people,

the morale in the world. It's so thick. When you come to the point where Christianity is not anything, it's just religion and people don't have anything left. They are tired about materialism and they are tired about almost anything. It's true. Usually that's the time for God to show up. It's always been like that through the centuries, if you look back. That's the time that we are right now.

"I believe U.S.A. is growing to that point too. I can't tell. I haven't been in U.S. for one and a half years now. God told us to take Europe first, so we're going to."

**Tell me a little bit about yourself. How did you come to the Lord? What's your musical background?

"I started playing rock music when I was 12 years old. I was not a Christian then. I was very young. I had my life like a rock 'n' roll life. That's the story of my life too. When I was 21, my brother and my sister became Christians and that shocked me. It really shocked me, because the idea and my thoughts about Christianity was very wrong, very strange. When I saw the big change in their lives, it really effected me very much. It started there for me to really think about being a Christian myself. It took about a year, through different things that happened to me with my girlfriend, who's my wife now, problems between us. All these things with my family and you know? It just came to a point where I decided to really try to follow Jesus Christ. That's what I did. It was a night in Goteborg, at the youth club there. I decided to follow Jesus there. That's when it all started. I actually stopped playing in the band. I told them I became a Christian and so I had some few gigs left and I did them and so I quit playing for awhile. Actually, four years.

"I started to play acoustic guitar when I was out to youth clubs and discotheques. All the music people was listening to was the kind of music I played before. All the time when you start to play acoustic guitar, it was not comparable to when AC-DC or something was playing. I thought, 'Why can't I play that kind of music, being called very strongly and preaching the gospel from it. That's why I started Jerusalem. It just went on. I'm married now and have four kids.'" (He's 37.)

**You told me a little bit about your plans, like a new album and touring Europe. Do you have any other plans for the near future you could tell me?

"Well, we are building up a studio outside Stockholm. That's almost finished. We've done some records for artists here that we know, friends of ours. In the spring we will start doing our own record. So, before Christmas I will go off by myself and do new music. I think the new record will be very hard."

**There are lots of fans in the U.S. who are excited about hearing from you again.

"I don't have any direct plans now to go to the U.S.A."

**Have you all made enough money touring? Have you been able to survive okay because of your music?

"Yeah. I can say, before we came to the school, we had a real financial struggle. But then when we quit playing, we didn't even practice. We just quit playing. Mike didn't play his drums for six months. I was just mainly playing acoustic guitar. We just went into God's Word and into teaching. During that time God really did miracles. It was amazing to see.

"We just played Scandinavia. We have played Scandinavia this autumn. We're almost finished now. It's been very good.

I don't believe that you, as a Christian, as a child of the King, should have financial struggles. I think that's wrong. I can't find that in the Bible. I'm not talking about driving in Cadillacs and stuff like that. If you are a servant of God, God should take care of you. I think that, that's the attitude in your heart, when you know what God is. If you know what He says in His Word and you believe it, it will be so. But if you just know it and don't believe it, it won't be like that. That's just the way it is. I think that we missed there. Right now we feel much more steady than we ever have. We've been going on for 11 years and we've been full-time for six years. So, we learned nothing during that time."

**It's not easy, is it? To make that point between just knowing and believing it? What sort of tangible advice could you give for people who struggle with that?

"I can just tell you that for me it was just I took the time. That's what I did. I was deciding not to do anything else than just sit down with God and just get His Word inside of me. It didn't happen overnight. It didn't happen even over a month, two months, but after four and five months, I started to see that I was changing. My thoughts, my attitudes, my energy for the gospel was much stronger than ever. I couldn't understand at first, but then I saw.

"Many, many Christian artists today don't even know if they should preach Jesus or not. I mean they have a struggle with that. I'm not condemning them, because of that, but I know that they have a struggle between the intellect and the heart, because we think that the world doesn't want to hear about Jesus. That's our main attitude. So then, we don't preach Jesus. We give them something else. We talk about flowers or whatever you want, the air or the sky or whatever. We try to put God into that and try to make them understand that God is in it. In our attitude, actually, we all compromise. I mean if we really should be fair and true. You have to see what I'm trying to say. What I say, what Jesus said, 'Go out and preach the gospel.' The gospel is: He died and He was raised up from the dead on the third day and He's now sitting at the Father's right side and praying for us. The reason why the world still is existing is God is waiting for us to go out and preach the gospel. That's the reason. It's very simple for me. I think people will be surprised if they see us, if we come back to the U.S.

"It's very strong in the music. I think I've found myself much more in the music. Before, when we did **CAN'T STOP US NOW**, we didn't really know: 'is that the direction we're supposed to go to? Or are we going to stay in the harder rock music?'

"I feel that the music I really have inside of me is a war music. It's the music against principalities and the devil. That's the kind of music I want to play."

"I feel he's (the devil) scared about that music. He's trying to use that music, he's trying to take it. I think it's time.

"Stryper. They've started to get quite popular here too. I like that attitude. You can't stand up and try to be something, you know? I'm sure there are many bands trying to be heavy or trying to be really tough, but it's just an attitude. It has to come from your heart."

**I want to compliment you and your band on your sound. I think Jerusalem could be compared to Led-Zeppelin, because you rock with confidence and lots of emotion. You're very



HOLY SOLDIER

Ask anyone in L.A., "Who's hot in Christian metal?" and you're gonna hear the name **HOLY SOLDIER**. This is only the beginning of something I think God is going to use for His glory. **HOLY SOLDIER** is: Jamie Cramer, lead guitar and backup vocals; Robbie Brauns, lead vocals; Michael Cutting, lead guitar and backup vocals; Terry Russell, drums and backup vocals; and Andy Robbins on bass guitar.

****When did you guys start and how?**

"I really felt led when I was 17," says Robbie, "when I was playing with Jamie. God really spoke to my heart about becoming a Christian and serving Him. I had a real burden for rockers, because I was there. God told me to quit the band and serve the Lord. I knew I'd end up playing with Jamie again, that's what the Lord told me. I prayed for him a long time and on my birthday he called me up and said he wanted to play for the Lord. That's how we became Holy Soldier."

"We started writing tunes. I had met Andy the summer before the band was put together. He, at the time, was a backslid Christian. We had talked and he really wanted to rededicate himself to the Lord. He happened to be a bass player and he was kinda stuck in the back of my mind. Jamie, Andy and I got together with a drummer we had at the time, who's not playing with us now. That's how we started. God kinda moved all these different people into the band the way the Lord wanted it to be."

"It's been about a two and a half-year process," says Jamie, "to get the band the way it is, because there was some striving in the beginning. God came in and slowly set us straight, you know. Once the members that God wanted were in the band, which we have together now, God started to refine and break us. It's been a growing process."

****What style of metal do you play?**

"We're commercial hard rock. It's not real hard metal. I would classify it, secular band wise, as maybe a cross between Dokken and Ratt. We're commercial/melodic."

"We definitely have a strong metal edge, but with the nice melodiousness of four-part harmonies," says Terry. "We do some acapella intros, where we start out with vocals and break right into music."

****What are your lyrics like?**

"A lot of it, I'd say, are things that go on in our heart. Like a song called **TAKE IT AWAY**. You know, the Lord says to cast our cares upon Him. He cares for us. It's about letting the Lord take pain out of your heart and knowing that you can cast your cares upon the Lord."

"We have a song called **SURRENDER YOUR HEART**, which is about actually accepting Christ as your savior into your heart."

"A lot of our tunes are written in today's language," says Mike, "to relate to everyday problems that we all experience: hurt, disappointment and pain. We write in a way that young people can relate to, by the lyrics, what's happening in

their life. We can give them a positive alternative, you know? The Lord. That's how we write our lyrics."

***What are your shows like?

"Rad. We try our best. We try and be as high-energy as possible. We don't like to stand still. We just like to move and be as energetic and showman as possible. We like to combine the best. So many bands may sound great, but are kinda boring live, or they might put on an excellent live show, but they lack musically. We try our best to combine all three of these elements: musically, visually and vocally. We want to be as professional as we possibly can."

"Right now," says Terry, "God's really been blessing, because Holy Soldier is getting pretty well known for our stage appearance and stage show. People tend to say that we're definitely your more energetic and fun-to-watch band than the ones that are out there right now."

"We've been blessed a lot with a huge following also. We sold out Gazzarri's the first time we played there. Our average draw so far is about 700. God has really blessed. More people are hearing about it. That's what it's all about, we wanna reach the lost crowd."

***What kind of venues do you play in mostly?

"Mostly the secular rock circuit in Southern California. The Hollywood circuit: The Whiskey-A Go-Go on Sunset Strip; Gazzarri's; The Country Club in Reseda; basically your basic rock and roll clubs. Places where Ratt, Van Halen, Motley Crue and guys like that have come out of. They've all played these circuits and they've all come out of 'em. We feel called to be in there."

"God's called us to be a light in the darkness. It doesn't get any darker than the places we play."

"We don't really feel led to go around and play churches or anything," explains Terry, "cause we're not really out to make fat Christians fatter. We're out to go feed the people who are really hungry for the Word and they tend to be at all the L.A. secular clubs we've been playing."

***What kinda talkin' do ya do, or preachin'?

"Basically wherever the Spirit leads at the time," says Robbie. "You kinda have to let the Spirit kinda show what the crowd's reaction is, whether they're gonna really receive the Lord. I always say something like why we're all up ther and that we're all Christians. Our lyrics alone make bold statements about that. If the Holy Spirit's really moving, then I can feel that the crowd is willing to receive a heavy message. Then, whatever God lays on my heart, I will say what's on my heart."

"I haven't come to the point of an altar call, but hey! Maybe soon. Whatever God leads. He is Lord and I'm only gonna be obedient to what He has, you know?"

"We haven't gotten out of Southern California yet. God is really moving mightily and preparing us. We've been going through the fire and getting prepared in our lives and our hearts in every way. All of this has been happening so far and we haven't even left Southern California. We feel that something is right around the corner."

***You know, Southern California is a huge harvest field.

"It is. It's a blessing. Tonight, we just got through with part of our ministry. We have a Bible study. A lot of people get saved at our shows and we invite 'em to our study. Tonight we just got through baptizing some of 'em. To be able to actually see the fruit of our ministry—it was really a joy."

***Tell me some praise reports or weird and/or interesting stories that have happened to you as a band.

"This is one thing that always sticks in my mind," says Terry. "Two of our road crew members are from New Jersey. They came out here and they saw the band one night. They were some of Robbie's ministry. He had been ministering to them. They had been hardcore partiers and they weren't saved."

"He gave them free tickets to come to the show. That was the only way he could get them to come. They came out to our show one night. They were, like, on LSD and they were all really wasted. Robbie started ministering from the stage, telling the audience that Jesus was the only way and if they got killed tonight and they didn't know the Lord, they'd go to hell."

"It got real blunt at that point," jokes Robbie.

"God laid on Robbie's heart to get real bold. They got sober in a flash. All the drugs wore off. They were busted right there. God just got with them and they became saved. Now they're two of the most on-fire people I know."

"One day, shortly after Duane was saved—he was probably about three months old in the Lord—he was playing football one day. This guy walked up to him and said, 'Hey. You're a really good football player.'

He said, 'It's not me. It's the Lord that makes me play this way.'

The guy said, 'Whoa. You're a Christian? I used to be into that kind of thing. I kinda got out of it.'

"He said, 'Do you wanna go to heaven?' They got out the Bible and Duane started sharing scripture with him and the guy rededicated his life right there. They prayed together. After they prayed together, Duane promised to keep in touch with the guy and he left. This guy was so fired up on his way home, because the Lord had blasted him heavily with the Spirit. He was on the freeway and saw a car on fire on the side of the road. The guy pulled over to help the people and got out of his car and got hit by a Mac truck and got killed."

"When I heard that, I thought, 'God is so good. He knew that that guy was gonna get hit by a truck and He gave him a second chance.'

"It was neat that God used a guy that got saved through our ministry to reach that guy before he died. It's a real blessing that through our ministry that guy went to heaven."

"I accepted the Lord about eight years ago and I backslid heavily. It's really neat to see, now, all the people that I prayed for all these years while I was in high school and stuff—seeing 'em all get saved. Seeing like a revival going through South Bay. All the young people. It's outrageous. Within the club circuit alone. We'll play shows with bands like Omen and Pandemonium and things like that. When we played with Omen and Pandemonium people were throwing things at us, but the majority of the people really responded to what the Spirit was saying on their heart. There's a really neat revival going on out here. People are beginning to know Jesus."

"I don't know how a lot of churches feel about us having really long hair, wearing the tight pants and flashy stuff, but I know, before I was a Christian, if I would've had someone with short hair and glasses ever come up to me and tell me God's cool and everything, you know? I would've snapped. It would take someone I could relate to to minister to me first. That's why we feel that's our ministry to the secular rock world."

"We like to go out there with the energy and the show that can be compared with any of these top-drawing secular bands. Instead of singing about death and destruction and glorifying Satan, we glorify Jesus Christ and we uplift Him at our shows. People know that Holy Soldier stands for Jesus Christ. We like to let people know where we stand."

**I guess the name Holy Soldier's kind of self-explaining?

"Yeah. That's kinda neat too. People identify that with the Lord and not the band."

"It's also not stating that we're holy, because we all fall short of the glory of God, but it represents that, when we accepted Jesus Christ into our heart, we are made holy through the blood of Christ."

**What are your plans?

"God's invasion. Right now we're just finishing our debut EP. What we're trying to do with that is send it to record labels and planning on packaging it and possibly marketing it in a semi-local area, maybe Southern California."

"That's what we're doing as far as any kind of product. As we've been selling out these clubs, God's really been blessing. That's what we're trying to do is just keep playing and reaching a larger audience and eventually get to where we can start going on the road and touring. We wanna tell the whole world about Christ."

**For sure if you wanna sell a tape through Heaven's Metal, lots of bands have done that and got a real good response.

"Thank you. That would be a total blessing. Right now we're still getting the funds together. We wanna have it on cassette, shrink-wrapped and packaged. When it gets to that point, we'll definitely appreciate your help."

**What's the biggest problem in Christian music?

"I think a lot of bands feel that once they get saved," says Michael, "you know? They start playing rock and roll. They tend to want to alienate themselves from the secular world. We're in the world, but not to be of the world. When Christ came, He didn't hang out with the righteous people. He went to the sinner and He ministered to them. Scripture says, 'It's not the healthy that need a doctor, but the sick.' I feel that a lot of bands today, which is cool too, if they're called to do that, but they're kind of afraid to go back into that area. To go back into where they came out of."

"It takes a special calling for a band to turn around and go right back into the muck and the garbage. The bars and clubs where people are just there to pick up on other people and get drunk and party, you know? It's a trip, you know. We feel that's what God is calling us to do. People need the answers that way. Like Robbie was saying earlier, I couldn't relate to someone coming up to me with short hair, you know, because I was a long hair. If they would've said, 'Hey, Jesus and stuff,' I'd say, 'Back off.' People do relate. They see and go, 'Wow.' They see people with long hair. They look at the outward first. 'Well, they look cool. They have long hair. Wow. I guess maybe the Jesus stuff is cool.' Then they check it out. They're more inclined to open up to it and listen what we have to say."

"One of the problems, I think, also is that not enough of the Christian bands have follow-up programs," says Terry. "Holy Soldier, like Jamie was saying earlier, Wednesday we have our Bible study that we invite the kids to that end up accepting Christ. We also have a church that we recommend

everyone to. The Lord's called us to make disciples of all men, not just to say, 'Alright. You want to accept Christ into your heart,' and not follow-up on it. That first beginning is the roughest part of the Christian walk. That's what we want to do. We want to offer the kids a follow-up program where we can keep in touch with them or they can keep in touch with us for help and stuff, because it does tend to get a bit rough. I just wish that more Christian bands would have some sort of a follow-up project for the kids to go to."

**My follow-up question is: What are you gonna do about it?

"Try to set an example for the other Christian bands that are out there. To just kind of ring in their brains that it is important to have some kind of follow-up program, so we don't just leave all these kids hanging when they say, 'Okay, here. I want to accept Christ into my heart. Now that I've done this, where do I go? Where do we go from here?' You know?"

"Right now Holy Soldier is trying to stress how important it is to have a follow-up project for these kids to turn to. A lot of times, the closest these kids will ever get to a ministry or a church is to meet these Christian bands and listen to them. It's so important that these bands turn around and give these kids some place to go to for follow-up ministry also. We really want to stress that. That's what we want to do about it, just be a good witness and show these bands. We're not judging 'em and saying, 'We're great and they're not.' It's so important for all of us to have something for kids to turn to also."

**That is so right-on in the Lord.

What would it take if, for instance, some readers of Heaven's Metal on the East Coast or somewhere wanted to bring you guys in?

"Get ahold of us, you know, through you. All it takes is the financial support to get our crew, our equipment and our bodies out there and taking us back."

"Yeah, just basically a phone call and then the financial situation from there. If we would have the money to make it out there, or if somebody would be willing to pay for our trip out there and stuff, you know? We don't really go out and try to play these clubs and places for the money. That means nothing to us. The gospel means more to us than anything out there. It's like, right now our budget is nothing. If somebody would be willing to provide means of transportation and a place to stay, hey! We will go play anywhere. We're out to spread the gospel. That's what God has called us to do."

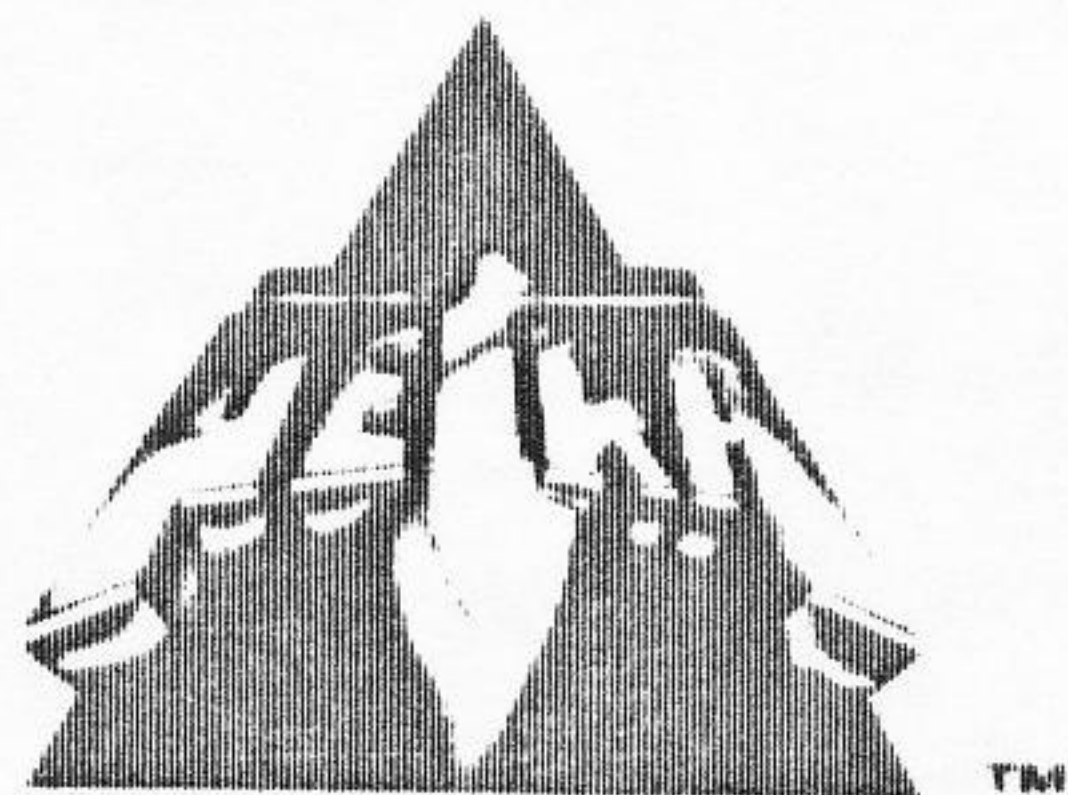
**How can the Heaven's Metal pray for ya?

"That God's will be done. That God's grace will keep us in everything we do."

Also we would like to have everybody keep Holy Soldier lifted up in prayer that we could get signed with a very good major label, because, in order to really minister to the whole world, we have to get picked up by a label that can distribute us well and be able to put up the funds to tour. That's the other thing too, that the Lord would place us in the right record company."

**Is there anything else you'd like to say?

"God bless everyone who reads the magazine."



Christian rockers rejoice! Petra's back between the speakers and crankin' out some righteous rock. They are just finishing their **BACK TO THE STREETS** tour with Degarmo and Key. Heaven's Metal caught up with the rejuvenated Petra in Fort Worth on November 15th.

Geoff Moore's band took the stage first to the sound of fiery "80's metal-like" guitar riffs. They played an energetic 25-minute set with a sound system that makes all local bands envious. It was loud!

The guitarist, Dale Oliver, played those sizzling metal leads that pop groups all over slip into their songs in order to sound contemporary. I bet nobody knew this trend would spread when Eddie Van Halen laid down a mean little solo for Michael Jackson's mega-hit, **BEAT IT**. We all know the pop bands are borrowing from the best style around—metal!

Degarmo and Key came out next and played a fast 45-minute set. Now I know why some Heaven's Metal readers have voted Dana Key as one of the best Christian guitarists. Those who voted for him definitely must've seen him live. He played the **STAR-SPANGLED BANNER** a la Jimi Hendrix with ease, as well as power chording his way from one distorted riff to another. Overall, Degarmo and Key's live sound is middle of the road rock with plenty of electricity jolting through their amps, which makes them sound real heavy.

Petra's set delivered what was promised—rock and roll. This tour establishes them as a real rock band and not a cotton candy worship team.

John Schlitt makes all the difference in the world for Petra. His voice is simply incredible. It seems as though he doesn't even have to try. His lungs just force out that golden voice.

Petra decided to make this sound change, taking them back to their roots. The change seems dramatic when you compare **BACK TO THE STREETS** with their last studio album, **BEAT THE SYSTEM**. Compared to the live album though, it's not much of a change. If you've seen Petra live, you know that their concerts have always been more radical than their records.

"I think **BACK TO THE STREETS** is the truest album to date, ever, of Petra's music and talent," says guitarist Bob Hartman. "We went for energy in the studio, even over perfection in some places.

"We wanted to go that direction and John's voice was almost like a confirmation to do that. He came from just a very basic rock band (Head East) himself."

I believe one of the reasons God arranged this interview with Petra is the song and message **SHAKIN' THE HOUSE**. Bob wrote this powerful song that speaks of the judgement beginning in the house of God. (1 Peter 4:17)

"Everything that can be shaken will be shakin' from within/ Better have your house in order when the shaking begins...You examine your foundation—does it stand on rock or sand/ When the smoke clears does it bring fears—when the houses fall or stand...but don't fear when it comes near/ And you see the raging fire/ If you hold fast it will all pass/ Til your heart has His desire."

When they played this, the message shook the music as well. Every instrument thundered with authority and when the song was over everyone stood stunned in silence. Powerful huh?

**Have you and the band been going through some shaking personally?

"Absolutely. Almost everyone I know is. It's such a hard thing and yet it's a good thing to go through. The Bible says, 'Whom the Lord loves, He chastens,' or He spans, basically. God is trying to get the body of Christ in line. It's not just us saying this. It's pastors all over the country saying that, for themselves and the churches. God is trying to bring a real renewal back into the body of Christ. There is a shaking. He knows how to get our attention when He wants to.

"When Greg, our former singer, left, we had to stop and think: 'God, do you want us to go on?' We didn't want to assume that God did and be out there trying to do it on our own if He didn't want it. He let us know in no uncertain terms that He did want us to go on, but it was a time of re-evaluating and shaking, if you will, about that. To make sure our hearts were right and our motives were renewed and we were on the right track going out to do it again for the right reason.

"I'm an old-timer basically. I've been around a long time in this music and in this business. I don't know if any of your readers would care what I have to say or not, but if they did care and if I could just say one thing to 'em, what I would want to say is: 'Be careful not to neglect the body of Christ. Discern the body of Christ.' That's what it actually meant when the apostle Paul said, 'Some of you are sick, because you partook of the Lord's supper in an unworthy manner.' (1 Cor. 11:23-30) It actually meant not discerning the body of Christ. In other words, not recognizing the part of the body of Christ that they are. We need each other.

We need to stretch the envelope musically and ministry-wise to reach all men for Christ, but we need to do it in such a way that doesn't alienate one another as Christians in the body of Christ. We cannot allow Satan to divide us. It is one of his key tools: divide and conquer. Satan is constantly trying to divide the church. If I could say anything, it would be that. Don't allow Satan to get in there and divide the church.

"Be a part of the body of Christ. You are a part of the body of Christ if you're a Christian. Allow people to know that and not forsake the fellowshiping together will all people. If we're all in Christ, there's a bond between us that needs to be there. What I'm saying is, 'Don't be Lone Rangers.' Stay in contact with the body of Christ. That's where true ministry flows from. It flows from the body of Christ. Those are gifts to the body of Christ. With all that in mind, it will really work to expand the kingdom. Then we'll really see some things happen."

**You've been attacked in the area of Christian rock for years now. Have you had to come up with any new answers in response to the latest "wave," as it were, of attacks by Swaggert and Wilkerson?

"I tell ya. There's just some people who you'll just never, never change their mind. Where they're coming from is not an intellectual base at all. They're coming from an emotional base, that's actually nothing more than prejudice. In other words, the way they feel about rock and roll music is a prejudice. It's an emotionally-based feeling that they're

expressing. You can never change that. There's some people you can never change. You can confront them with all the facts. They can look at the facts, but they will ignore the facts because they have an emotional feeling that they are responding to.

"The Holy Spirit just has to come and zap 'em and show 'em and open their eyes. It has to be a miracle of God. Just like it is with any prejudice. Just like it is for somebody who hates black people. God has to deal with their heart.

"What I'm saying now to people that do that, I just have to say, 'Jesus said that a good tree can't bear bad fruit and the bad tree can't bear good fruit. God did not tell us to judge one another, and there's a lot of that going around. But He did tell us to be fruit inspectors.' We invite people to come and inspect fruit of the ministry of Petra. 'Come and see if people are being turned away from the Lord, or if people are being turned to the Lord. Is our ministry uplifting the Lord, or are we ignoring the Lord? Come and inspect our fruit and make your choice yourself.' We are saying not to lump us in with every other group, because I can't stand here and vouch for every group, every artist—whether they be heavy metal or rock or MOR or Southern gospel or whatever. I can't stand here and vouch for where their heart is, what their motive is, what they're trying to do and what their fruit is. I can't. I can say, 'Come and look at Petra and examine the fruit of our ministry and see if it's good fruit or bad fruit and then take the scriptures for what they say.' You know, 'Good fruit can't come from a bad tree.'"

**You guys are veterans of Christian rock. What sort of advice would you give to Christians wanting to form a rock band?

"I would say the very first thing to do is to really pray whether or not this is what God wants you to do. That's the first thing, because a lot of times we have our idea and then we try. This happened to me and this is the reason I know. I was a rock and roll guitar player and, because of that, when I first became a Christian I just felt, 'A-ha! I know what I'm supposed to do. I'm supposed to be in a rock band.' Well it ain't necessarily so, because I tried to start a band on my own, in my own strength, when I wasn't ready, and I went out and fell on my face with it. It was a disaster.

"At that point I said, 'Okay Lord. Maybe this is not what I'm supposed to do. I don't care. All I want to do is serve you with my life. If it involves my music, that's fine. If I have to just play an acoustic guitar at a Bible study, that's fine too. But whatever it is, I'm yours.' At that point is when Petra started.

"God said, 'Okay. Finally I've got you where I want you. I've got your music off the throne of your life and I've got Me on the throne of your life. Now I'm Lord in your life and now you can be a minister. Now you can do a ministry. Now you can glorify Me.'

"Because when we go out and we don't have our talent on the altar to God, and we're doing it for other reasons, we have to constantly re-evaluate our motives and where we're coming from and know whether or not we've gotten off-base or not with what we're doing. To constantly lay that gift before God. Only when it's laid before Him and devoted to Him, can He use it as a tool and something to minister and to touch someone else.

"Seek out whether or not God has a ministry for you and if God wants you to use your talent for Him. The second thing I would say is: 'If you want to serve the Lord with your music, try to express that to your pastor or your youth pastor or someone that's in leadership over you. If you don't have someone in leadership over you, then find someone.' That's very important—to have somebody that's over you in the Lord.

They may not always totally understand what you're doing. When Petra started, we were lucky enough that the pastor of the church didn't like rock music at all, but he knew us as people and he knew us personally. He knew our hearts and he knew what we wanted to do. He had enough faith in God's ability to: either take us out of it, if it wasn't right; or to bless us if it was right. He allowed God to work instead of trying to step in and make a judgement on his own. That allowed us the liberty to grow in God and it let our ministry grow. It was very valuable to have that happen.

"Then I'd say, 'Start from a local base. Don't be afraid to play anywhere that you have an opportunity to play.' When Petra started out, every Sunday afternoon the other guitar player and I went to a youth detention center and did a service for some kids who didn't want to hear about the Lord. We learned how to use music to minister to kids by doing that. It was a hard ministry. It's a thankless ministry. No one recognized us in church and said, 'Hey, these guys are doing a great thing! We went on and did it week after week after week. We were faithful to it. I believe that when you're faithful in small things, God will give you bigger things. That's the next rule of thumb for anybody that wants to serve the Lord with their music. People look at Petra and say, 'Yeah. If we get our band together, it'll be just like that. We'll be doing that.' It took us 14 years to get where we are. It didn't happen overnight. I'm not saying it's gonna take that long for anyone else, but we've paid a lot of dues, if I might use that word. We have sacrificed a lot. God knows all about that, so I don't have to talk about it. To whom much is given, much shall be required. In other words, God gives you a great talent to use for Him, much is gonna be required in return."

Amen. I guess those old guys know what they're talkin' about, eh?

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HOLY DANGER. This band has some blazing guitar work. They've released the first song after their style-change into the raw metal range. It's called **ONE WAY**. The vocals are supposed to sound like Mercyful Fate. I can't vouch for that, but I can tell you that they are unusual. It sounds like Guy Ritter, lead vocalist, slowed down his vocal tracks in the production.

This is only the fresh beginning of something new from this talented group. Once things get going, Holy Danger hopes to release an album. If you'd like a taste of what is to come, send \$2 for a copy on a high bias tape of **ONE WAY**. Make checks payable to Commercial Attractions, 1434 Willamette St, Eugene OR 97401. Heaven's Metal'll keep ya posted on their progress.

"We feel a real renewing of the Spirit. We've had our first three-piece prayer meeting a while ago and the Holy Spirit moved like the first time we got together as a group—just real powerfully. We really feel refreshing coming from the Lord and renewing in what He's gonna be doing. We really wanna minister. That's where we're at.

"We work full-time jobs too and we, in the natural, don't like our full-time jobs, but we know that God's using us there too. We are again humbling ourselves and in due time God will work whatever He wants to work out. If you can just get that attitude about it, He can start blessing ya. You don't start grumbling as much and you can handle it that much more. You start serving people that much more in your job and just approaching it from a real Christian aspect. We've seen people get saved.

"The bass player and I build Litton microwaves on an assembly line. You got another person right next to you or right across from you for eight hours and they can't move—so you got 'em! The Lord has let us witness to people and lead 'em to salvation. We want to be able to do whatever God wants us to do and be open to whatever it is, whether He wants us to stay there or play rock and roll. We'd love to just go full-time and quit our jobs and stuff. Whatever God wants, that's what we want. We know that's gonna be best.

"Once we're obedient in that small stuff, that's when He can open it up. He's just seein' if you're gonna be faithful there or are you just gonna bum out. There's quite a release in that.

**What's God been teachin' ya lately?

"Boy! The obedience thing and being obedient in the small things, like prayer, regular church attendance and tithing. Just bringing us back to first base again. Being a committed Christian, not flaking off church, ya know? Just not flaking off the things you can flake off so easily. God is really watchin' ya to see what you're gonna do with 'em—to see if you're gonna be responsible or not. 'Til you are, you aren't gonna get the blessings and you're not gonna get moved into a more responsible area. He may show ya what He wants ya to do, but until you're obedient, that's when it'll start happenin'.

"There's a couple new songs that I've written that we haven't ever rehearsed as a band. I've recorded them myself and laid down all the pieces. One of 'em is called **ROLL THE ROCK**. The second verse is: 'The latest rage, because I rock, you used to call me a fake/ It might be the money or maybe the fame or who can I take?/ I'm not a scholar, but I've read in the book—it's a dangerous thing: to call the work of God to be of the devil makes the warning bell ring./ There's no question who I play for, because I roll for the mightiest Rock./ If you've got a question about my profession, well my boss is ready to talk./ Roll the Rock, the Rock.'

"There's another one too that kinda gets back to what I was sayin' earlier. There may be people that disagree with me in this and that's fine. Whatever you're called to, but this is called **ROCK STEADY**: 'Singing obscurities, hidden in rhyme/ Tell 'em the truth in your album by-line./ But a black and white issue needs a black and white truth/ and the God I serve is speaking to you./ You've got to rock steady/ be ready/ when evil comes your way./ Rock steady/ be ready/ don't let it lead you astray.'"

**How can the Heaven's Metal readers pray for ya?

"They can pray for us according to 2 Peter 3:18, where it says, 'But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.' If that continues to happen, we can develop into mature Christians and to also mature into the abundant life that God has for us and everything else will fall into place, you know? Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added unto you. That we'll be able to know Jesus fully."

Jerusalem cont'd

tight musically.

"We enjoyed the U.S.A.. We really want to go back. We don't have any negative things about U.S.. I think some of the concerts we did there was not all good. The usual people were coming to the concerts, but just the way the concerts were made was not really good—some of them were really bad. God told me very specifically that I should be very sensitive about who I'm working with. When the time comes, He's gonna raise up the right people and it will be very good."

Are you pleased with the **LIVE IN THE U.S.A. album?

"Yeah, well, I am in one way, but I feel that I don't think so much about what we've done before. I know some songs I like more than other songs and there are records I like more than other records. I mean, if you look to the music side, and the more professional side, I think **CAN'T STOP US NOW** is one of the best we've done. If you look at energy and, what should I say, the warmth of the music, I'd probably think that **WARRIOR** and the **LIVE IN THE U.S.A.** is the better ones. I know that the next one that will come now will be the strongest one we've done, because we've changed so much—I know that."

**When do you think is the date you'll release that? Do you know that at all?

"The only thing I know right now is that we're going to do it in the spring and then I will probably start to try to put it on a record company. Right now we're not bound to any record company. That will be a question I'll have—where we're supposed to be. As soon as God opens that door, it will be there."

**How can the reader of Heaven's Metal pray for you?

"Well, they can pray for open doors for us in Europe. Especially England, because that's our next step. I think that we ought to effect the whole world, so that's what we are doing. So they have to pray that God will show us the right way there and open the doors for us there. He showed us some things, but we need more revelation from Him about it. They can pray for that and they can pray for protection over our families and over our finances and just pray that, when I go into the studio and do the record, it will be a very, very strong record."

~~~~~ Apostle cont'd ~~~~~

a good time and it's gone really well. We got some great tracks. I think it's gonna be a real exciting album, whether it's a Christian listening to it or somebody who's not saved."

This band is serving the Lord. Their love for God will not fail. Love never fails. Let's pray that their love for God becomes contagious to all their listeners.

RAPTURE

I first heard about this band from Myke Connell of TNK. He had just returned from touring and was ranting and raving about how good Rapture was and how right-on in the Lord they were.

My sister lives in Albuquerque, where Rapture is from, so I naturally asked her to interview the band for me. Therefore, special thanks go to Vicki Bobick for making this story happen (It also helps classify Heaven's Metal as a family magazine. Soon you'll see it in bathrooms and doctor's offices everywhere).

Rob Hidalgo, 25, has been playing drums for 13 years. Mike Shane, 20, has played bass for six years. Paul Scozzafava, 24, has been playing guitar for six years and singing for one year.

Asked who the leader of the band was and they all replied, "God!"

Rapture has been together for one year now. They used to play in a secular band called Vigilante.

They got their name while watching Jimmy Swaggert, who was talking about the rapture of the church.

*How would you classify your sound?

"Thrash metal to hard rock." Don't worry, they'll release a demo soon.

The band's main goal is to spread the Word of Jesus Christ. Secondary goal is to be the best musicians possible.

The band is in the process of moving to L.A., but are being delayed. "We're all young Christians," says Rob. "God's got us on the shelf right now. When we're ready, He'll take us off the shelf. It's really rough, but He gets us through."

The band has played most of the clubs in the Albuquerque area. Until the recent moving plans, they played every weekend.

They feel rock 'n' roll opens doors and that God can and does use it. It's the Lord's will for them to play rock. They want to reach as many people as possible. They feel that they aren't Christian entertainers, but soldiers of Christ striving to spread God's Word.

"It's not easy to be young, in a band and a Christian," says Paul. "You have to be responsible to people. Unlike in a secular band, where anything goes—sex & drugs. There's a lot more temptations for a Christian band. We just try to keep in tune with the Lord."

"There's a fine line between a rock band and a Christian band. A rock band is always starving for recognition. If God wants our Christian to make it, fine; if not, there won't be hard hearts. God is preparing us by having us play to a different crowd."

"Jimmy Swaggert and David Wilkerson are down and out on rock 'n' roll. He uses them in their own way, just as He uses us in our own way. It's not easy playing to a secular audience, but we let the strategy of the Holy Spirit prevail. We've had cigarette butts and bottles thrown at us. We've been spit at, but we just rebuke the enemy and have compassion toward these people."

Rapture's advice to other bands is to: study and read the Word; worry more about the Lord and not the band; and to grow in the Lord, always seeking His will.

They've had churches protest their music. The band prays



for these churches to open their eyes—if they're wrong; and for God to open their own eyes if they are in the wrong.

"Being in a band is like being in a marriage," says Mike. "You are responsible to each other. When backsliding occurs, they talk and pray about it."

Rob became a Christian while working as a stage manager when Stryper was in town. He saw something he hadn't seen before—a Christian band that looked like a hard rock band. The outfits were rock 'n' roll and they had long hair too. He saw something different and knew it was okay to have his own look and be a Christian.

Mike was also influence by Stryper. He heard them talking and felt God had chosen him to be saved. "The time was right and I felt it."

Paul was raised Roman Catholic and became a Christian while staying in a hotel with Stryper.

Now, is Stryper bearing fruit or what?

RIZER. This band from Flagstaff, AZ, has quietly sold their demo through Heaven's Metal with no indication of how they sound. Well, I finally got a copy to review. It is good, solid metal with vocals that sound seasoned. The vocalist doesn't sound like an inexperienced kid. Remember when Danny Joe Brown left Molly Hatchet for awhile and they got someone to fill in on lead vocals? (1981) Well anyway, this guy sounds like that guy who sang for Molly Hatchet on their **BEATIN' THE ODDS** album.

The guitar work here sounds as gritty as any of Molly Hatchet's best work. It also has the low-end bite that Judas Priest uses all the time. This band plays through the right equipment.

cont'd next pg

FIRST STRIKE

There's two groups who have almost disappeared off the musical map in Christian metal: Barnabas and First Strike. Barnabas is scheduled to reappear on the scene with the long-awaited and long-delayed **LITTLE FOLKS**. As for First Strike, well, read on!

After the release of **ROCK OF OFFENSE** in late '84, First Strike lost their lead singer.

"We had to let him go," says guitarist Pat Boylan, "so we parted ways with him."

The two guitarists, Pat and Tim Larkin, took over the vocal position for awhile—and did a terrific job, I might add.

After they played as a four-piece for awhile, they put out word that they needed a lead vocalist.

"We auditioned about a dozen or so. We found a guy from L.A. He's a real nice guy. He came up in August and pretty much joined the band from that point. He was in the group for about a year.

"About two months ago, things didn't work out with him either. It was for different reasons. He was going off in his own direction and towards a solo career and stuff. He had a different kind of calling, so we just decided it would be best if we kinda split ways. We let him go and now we've started singing again.

"We just found another lead vocalist. This guy's really good. His name's David Campanaro. He's from right here in Sacramento, which is kind of unusual. We were really fortunate and really blessed to find somebody so close and stuff. He's got a real excellent voice. He's probably the best vocalist that we've played with."

Another major happening that's effected First Strike during the last year has been the scene with Exit Records. Exit was formerly distributed by Word and A & M. Now they are distributed by Island, who does U2.

"All the Exit bands, which includes The 77's, Charlie Peacock, First Strike and Steve Scott, did a couple of showcases. That means we all went down to Exit studios and we all put on a live show—one band right after the other. We did this a couple of times for the executives of the record companies.

"It turns out that Island Records liked us, but they didn't really feel like they could use a hard rock band in their lineup, because they don't really have any hard rock bands.

"Exit Records came to us and said, 'Look, we'll try to work a deal with you guys, so you can be signed to Word Records.

"Meanwhile, things developed between the lead vocalist we had gotten right after the original one and our group. We parted ways with him and Exit kinda put the brakes on. They felt like we didn't have it together enough, as far as personnel was concerned, to go ahead and have us signed to Word."

Right now a couple of labels are interested, Word and Star Song. The band is working on remixing their new material by putting the new lead vocalist's tracks over the old one's. (He's number three, if you're keeping track.)

"Maybe by the end of next year we'll have an album out."

The band is open to signing with secular labels as well. "The most important thing is not necessarily who you sign with, it's just putting the material out. If that happens to

be on a secular label or not, that's fine by us. It won't really matter, because we're still going to say the same things."

**What are your lyrics like these days?

"They're pretty much the same. We tend to be more story orientated now than before. Before it seemed like there were more lyric ideas that were put into a song form. Now there's a complete idea that can go into the material, versus an idea that the lyrics circle around.

"There's a couple songs off there that did that, like **LONELINESS KILLS**. Now we got songs like **I GOT THE POWER** and **RUNNING WILD, RUNNING FREE**, about runaways and stuff. There's another one, **I JUST WANNA HOLD YOU**. It's kinda like a love song. Again, it can be between a guy and a girl, but it's more apt to be between God and yourself. We feel the new material is 150 times better than the first album. That just makes it more frustrating for us, because we don't have a way to vent that right now.

"We're still playin'. We've played up in Washington and locally a couple of times and a few other places, but nothing major as of yet. We're hoping that changes."

**I noticed you classify your music as power pop. Has your music changed?

"No. I would still consider the material on that first album to be pop metal or power pop. That's basically the same thing we're doing now.

"The writing has gotten better and the players are better too. We've had that time to improve with age. We don't want to say, 'heavy metal,' because there's more of a melodic line to it than you'll find in most heavy metal songs. We don't want to say, 'pop music,' because it's more hard guitar than anything else. The lineup's still the same: two guitars, drums and bass. There's still no keyboards in the group.

"We figure that people who like heavy metal will like our material also, 'cause we've got that hard edge. But, at the same time, we'll get a lot of people that like pop music, but who like it a little bit harder, that's all."

**I get the impression that you guys could do some ballads that just knock people out. Do you do any?

"We're doing one right now and there's a possibility of another one. The one we're doing now is called **TAKE A CHANCE ON LOVE**. It's real cool. Real nice. It was originally written for the first album, but wasn't real strong when we finished it up, so we decided to leave it off. We've since re-worked the song and now it sounds 100% better.

"Another thing is we never really had anyone that could sing a really good ballad. Now we do, so, chances are, that's gonna change quite a bit."

Steve Griffith, of Vector, will probably produce the new album. He helped out on the first one and did the work with their new material. Stay tuned...

Rizer cont'd

This six-song demo will not let any of you down. It's got guts where it counts, both lyrically and musically.

The song titles alone hint at the intelligence level of the lyrics: **WHEN THE REIGN COMES DOWN**. Songs like **BORN AGAIN** make no bones about the direction and intent of the song.

The production is not great, but it doesn't take away from the effectiveness of the music. Metalheads, check this out! You can't go wrong for \$6. Look at it as paying a dollar per song. Send to: Rizer Fan Club, 2612 W. Melvin St, A-30, Phoenix, AZ 85009.

Want to trade tapes? (Live or demos) Contact Mike Baxton @ 2466 Co. Rd.I, Moundsview, MN 55432.

HEADBANGING (JESUS STYLE)—Covers anything that you could think of that's heavy metal. Send \$4 for a year's subscription to: Cliff Powell, 610 Sussex Ave, Seaford, DE 19973. If you want to rap about the current heavy metal scene or just talk about a problem, call Cliff @ (302) 629-6650.

THE RISEN ROCK. A rad rag about Christian rock. Subscribe @ PO Box 1564, Point Roberts, WA 98281-1564.

Female heavy metal vocalist looking for musicians that want to rock for the Lord. Must be dedicated to Jesus Christ! Ages 18-24. Please send demo and personal info to Tina Parker, 2612 W. Melvin St. A-30, Phoenix, AZ 85009.

ZINE OF THE TIMES. Christian underground. \$5 for 6 issues. Make checks and MO's to David Joo, PO Box 33, Stirling City, CA 95978.

Anybody who has live tapes of Trouble, please contact me. I would like to buy a copy! Colin Zacharias.

SCAR Scar is a Christian band that plays heavy metal. Please pray that They can get off The ground. Scar is: Dale Epp - lead guitar; Greg Martens - lead guitar; Barry Kingcott - bass; Andy White - vocals; and Scott Knouse - drums. Their manager is: Colin "Battlezak" Zacharias. Letters can be sent to: Scar c/o Colin Zacharias, PO Box 309, Caronport, Sask. S0H-0S0, Canada.

Sanctuary wants to hear from you. Please send them praise reports or testimonies or opinions of Christian metal to: Sanctuary Ministries, c/o Sharon David, 1620 Rolling Greens Way, Whittier, CA 90601.

ABORTION IS MURDER! To help stop it, write letters to the editor in your local paper and keep the issue of abortion out front.

Heaven's Metal sells the following records: Saint - **TIME'S END**; Messiah Prophet - **MASTER OF THE METAL**; Leviticus - **I SHALL CONQUER** and **THE STRONGEST POWER** (Available soon); Jerusalem - **CAN'T STOP US NOW** and **LIVE IN THE USA**; The Daniel Band - **RISE UP, RUN FROM THE DARKNESS** and **STRAIGHT AHEAD**. Plus The Bride and other new Pure Metal artists as available. Records or tapes are \$8.98 plus \$1 postage. Mail directly to Heaven's Metal.

Back issues are still 75 cents. Order now. They're going up to \$1 next issue!

Kosher Records. For those hard-to-find metal imports. Contact Larry Miller @ 319 A. N. "J" St, Lompoc, CA 93436.

ROLL AWAY THE STONE. One year = \$2. Send to John Grassi, RD #2, Kempton, PA 19529.

THE CUTTING EDGE. Objective reviews of records and demos. 12 issues = \$9. Send to: Dan Kennedy, 8303 Hilton Way, Orlando, FLA 32810.

THE ACTIVIST. Awesome! Social commentary and much more. Sample issue = \$1. Send to: Manna Underground Press, 3383 1/2 Mahoning Ave, Youngstown, OH 44515.

VORTEXX. Great! Covers all types of Christian rock. Sample issue = \$2. 6-issue sub = \$6. Write: Vortexx, 12129 Genesee St, Alden, NY 14004.

Thanks for your prayers for Heaven's Metal. I'm excited about the constant growth and hope to see this become a full-color magazine right next to Circus and Creem on the shelf someday. If it happens, God's gotta be the One doing it, so I really appreciate your prayers for Him to direct me.

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THE WARNING - REPENT OR DIE. Available for \$6 from: Radicals For Christ, 124 S. Lennon, Azusa, CA 91702. The title alone makes you wanna buy it, doesn't it?

How 'bout if you knew it was speed metal with a hardcore, or should I say Godcore, twist to it? This tape will thrash, trash, stomp, romp and ravage even the gnarliest pair of ears.

Wait 'til you hear the lineup! On bass is Tim Hagelgan. Recognize him? He plays bass for Stryper. This is one of the things he did during his time off from the band, as well as work at a local music store. On lead vocals is Radical's own Burrito. He's been real active in the radical music scene in Southern Cal. On rip-roaring lead guitar is Tracy Grijalva. Tracy used to play with Swift Kick, which won the MIV Basement Tapes award in '84. All this skill is combined into a musical form that the casual listener may think no skill is required to play. Wrong. Closer listen will show intricate guitar work and jazz influences. Don't let that scare you off! This music is "beat you over the head"-type stuff. Check it out! Look for more news on The Warning in the future. Yes, they will have a new bassist in the future...and a drummer to boot!

This tape's been played on lots of college stations. If you'd like the phone and address of a college station in your area, write to Radicals For Christ.

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Tempest, Christian thrash metal group from Ohio, split up. Also, the group Anthem, advertised in Vol. II # 1, is not the regular group Anthem from Japan.

For those of you who bought the excellent, progressive 24-track demo tape, **CELESTIAL MESSENGER**, by Trytan, here's a short synopsis of six of the nine songs on it.

"The song on the first side is my personal favorite," says Lary Dean. "That's **DON'T TURN AWAY**. It's something that the Lord laid on our hearts to address the problem of teenage suicide in the United States. We've heard about enough of it. 22 teenagers a day in the country take their own lives and I think that really hurts the Lord and it hurts me as a Christian—to know that we're around young people all the time and maybe we're not taking the time to hear their deep cry that's coming from way inside their heart. This song is kind of telling 'em that, 'No matter how bad it gets, or what kind of problems you're going through, Somebody does care and that's Jesus.' He cares and He wants to be the King and the Lord and God of their life, so He can fill up those empty spaces.

"**GETTIN' READY** is kind of like an anthem of where we're at. We're gettin' ready to do God's work. We're getting ready to play music for Him and for the people that are hurting.

"**MR. ELUCIRIC** is kind of a weird tune. It's a synopsis of what the band is all about, plus an inside story of a guy who used to manage us. He was our booking agent. We tried to share the Lord with Him, but he just really isn't ready. It's kind of like our prayer for him, that he would come to know the Lord as his Savior.

"**CHAINS** is a song that Scotty wrote about people living in unity together and how a man and a wife have to have unity and that sometimes we think we're doing okay, but we're really not. The chains become burdensome and you have to get

Awesome!
Classic.

These metal crunchers are
really rockin' now! This album
wins the "most-improved" award hands
down. MASTER OF THE METAL is all the fair
representation of Messiah Prophet's sound that ROCK THE
FLOCK was not.

Phil Grabowski, who received a gold record award for his

This is an album to let the world hear. Charlie
stay in the high range that metal groups like Ratt use.
is truly not compromising on the lyrics or the music.
proclaimed and the sounds are not weak attempts to
--it is metal. They even take a stab at thrash
chorus in MASTER OF THE METAL. They pull
nice hammer-on, fret-slapping lead that

FOR WHOM DOES THE BELL TOLL,
STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN;

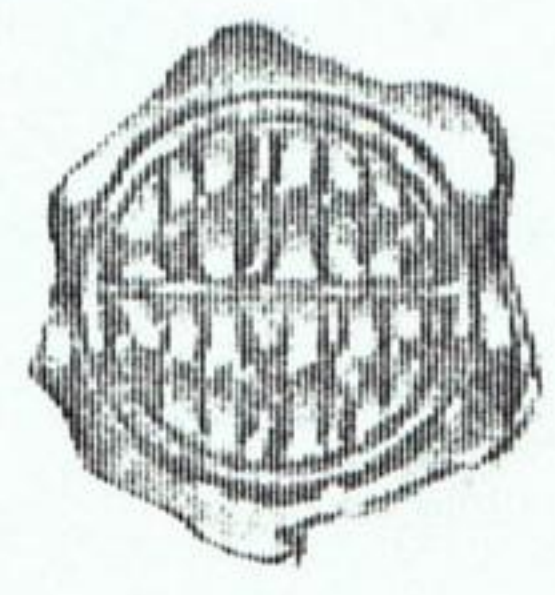
production work
this one.
Clark's vocals
Messiah Prophet
Jesus is boldly
sound like metal
after the second
out of it with a
sizzles!

Two standouts are:
which could be Christian rock's
and the pounding HEAVY METAL THUNDER.
FOR WHOM...., a moving ballad adapted
relies on the haunting vocals of rhythm guitarist,
HEAVY METAL THUNDER showcases the songwriting
band. God has breathed new life into this metal band,
sound that changes rhythms, tempos and moods in one song,
puts an appropriate label on Messiah Prophet's ministry
question to the listener: "Who are you going to



from Psalm 23,
Brian Nicarry.
improvement in the
creating a vibrant
HEAVY METAL THUNDER
and poses the
choose?"

MESSIAH PROPHET
ON



REALIZATION

Logo by Rob Shelton

The man said, "Come," so you walked down the aisle,
but you did not realize.

All you did was repeat a stale prayer
When will you open up your eyes?

It's the realization,
but you did not realize.

They told you that your time had come,
so you went underneath the water.

But when you came back up, you were still the same
because you did not realize.

BARREN CROSS

Barren Cross has a message for you. This comes from the interview Bob Hopkins had with 'em at Cornerstone '86.

"I'm an associate pastor at a church we started about two years ago," says Jim La Verde. "The name of the church is Sanctuary and it's a church for heavy metallers—not only for heavy metallers, but it's a follow-up system that we started back when Barren Cross and Stryper and all those groups started happenin.' All the kids that would get saved through the concerts would say, 'We don't have any place to fellowship where we can feel comfortable with our longer hair or whatever.'"

"So we started a place called Sanctuary and it started off as a small fellowship, then we really got involved and it just exploded. We've got hundreds of kids involved now and we've expanded to two churches and both churches are doing really great and we're teaching the Word. We fellowship with these people. The Christians are able to go to a Barren Cross concert or go to a Messiah Prophet concert and win these other heavy metallers to the Lord. The other heavy metallers look at the person that is witnessing to them and they feel comfortable because they don't look the part, you know? If I was wearing a suit and tie and went up to a heavy metallers, they'd say, 'Get out of my face.' But, if I would look like 'em a little bit and go up to 'em and try to witness to 'em, it's a different situation. That's what we've got. We've got a great follow-up system too. The kids are growing and we've got a Bible college sproutin' out of the whole thing.

The pastor is Bob Beeman. He's an evangelist and started the whole thing. I got involved about a year and a half ago. Steve got involved. He's part of the eldership over there. It's the greatest thing.

"If anybody hears this interview: think about starting a church for heavy metallers. Because there's a definite need." "Either that or make 'em feel comfortable at your own church," says Steve Whitaker. "It's the saddest thing. Two of my friends, who happened to have long hair, came to my church and really were seeking the Lord. The pastor pointed 'em out during a sermon. That was something that took me a long time to want to go back to that church, the church that I got really fed from.

"When that happened, I knew, 'If my church would do that, how many other churches would?'"

"Out of a burden because of that, kids just had no place to go. That's kind of how it started. They're actually getting

It's the realization,
but you did not realize.

Take the bread, take the wine. Let's celebrate.
If you don't understand, well that's okay

But you ate and drank death to yourself that day,
because you did not realize.

It's the realization,
but you did not realize.

It's the realization; not the act.

It's the realization; not the act.

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fed and tied into pastoral classes. There's actually long-haired pastors being brought up. I think it's definitely serving a good purpose."

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Sword has broken up. They apologize to everyone who sent for their demo and didn't get one. If you'd like a copy of their demo, don't send money, send me a blank tape and a self-addressed stamped envelope (with two 22-cent stamps on it) and I'll tape it for ya. Sword said it'd be cool.

Tony Crider, the ex-lead singer for Golgatha, has formed a new band called Cross Force. Look for news on them in the next issue, along with stories on One Bad Pig, White Cross, Messiah Prophet, the guitar pick winner and more!

Trytan cont'd

right with each other and with the Lord before those chains can be broke.

"IN HER EYES is a song about my wife and my mom and what they mean to me and how thankful I am that God's given me two beautiful women in my life to take care of me and look after me, which is something I think a lot of people have, especially young people and musicians, but don't appreciate. Man, if they weren't there, you'd really be gripin'.

"GENESIS is a song that's kind of like a seven-minute song about the first book of the Bible: from creation and the garden; to the temptation with the apple; to being cast out of the garden; to Noah and the flood and the promise of the seed of Abraham, meaning that Christ was gonna come through the seed of Abraham. That's kind of an instrumental-orientated song."

This tape is nothing short of mind-blowing. If you want it, send \$5 plus 50 cents postage (Outside US, send \$6.50) to: Bob Hopkins, RR # 1, Box 220, Mokena, IL 60448.

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